

A textual study of Sir Richard Ros's

La Belle Dame sans Mercy

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Master
of Arts in the University of London. April 1963

By

Margaret Norwell

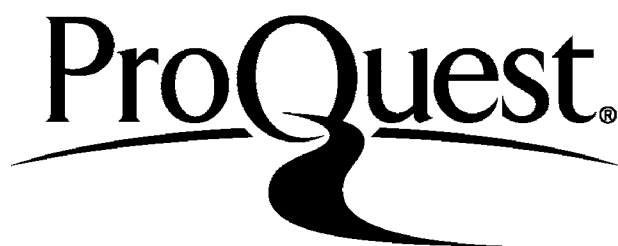
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Abstract:

In this new edition of La Belle Dame sans Mercy the chief aim has been to examine the textual problems presented by the manuscripts of the poem with a view to restoring as nearly as possible the substantive readings of the author's text, in the externals of dialect forms and spelling of one fifteenth century scribe working not very long after the poem was first written.

Descriptions of each of the six known manuscripts and of Pynson's (1526) and Thynne's (1532) printed versions are intended to provide as much information about the transmission of this text as possible. The characteristics of each scribe are mentioned briefly, and an analysis of the relationship between the manuscripts is attempted, although it is not possible to draw many firm conclusions.

A detailed analysis of all variant readings in the eight texts revealed the type of error likely to occur during the transmission of the poem. This information here leads to a discussion of the way in which such classification of error and the resulting knowledge of scribal tendencies can play a major part in establishing original readings. All substantive variants are set out in footnotes to the text, so that an editorial decision may be questioned and tested at any point. Thus a method of determining originality first used by Professor Kane in his 1959 edition of the 'A text' of Piers Plowman is applied to a text quite different in kind and scope, and found to be equally effective.

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The poem in Beale's Black Letter by Sir Richard Ross, written c. 1440, occurs in the following:

MS Fairfax 16 Bodleian Library (3.C. 246)

Previous Descriptions:

1. J. Schick ed., The Temple of Glas, EETS Extra Series LX,

Introduction: 97, pp. xviii-xix.

1) Bibliographical description of the six manuscripts and two early printed texts of the poem, in the order

	Page
F. Fairfax 16	5
H. Harley 372	27
L. Longleat 258	43
T. Trinity College, Cambridge, R. 3. 19	55
C. Cambridge University MS Ff. 1. 6	78
S. Sloane 1710	91
P. Pynson's Black Letter Chaucer, 1526	96
Th. Thynne's Black Letter Chaucer, printed by Thomas Godfray, 1532	106

Size:

10.5 by 33.1 cms.

Binding:

Early sixteenth century calf binding.

Number of Leaves:

343 plus 2 paper fly-leaves. (Although the Summary Catalogue

The poem La Belle Dame sans Mercy by Sir Richard Ros, written c. 1440, occurs in the following:

F. MS Fairfax 16 Bodleian Library (S.C. 3896)

Previous Descriptions:

1. J. Schick ed., The Temple of Glas, EETS Extra Series LX, London 1891, pp. xviii-xix.
2. W.W. Skeat ed., Chaucer's Works Vol.I, 2nd.ed. Oxford 1899, pp. 51-53.
3. Ernst Sieper ed., Lydgate's Reson and Sensuallyte, EETS Extra Series LXXXIV, London 1901, pp. xi-xiii.
4. E.P. Hammond, Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual, New York 1933, pp. 333-335.
5. F. Madan, H.H.E. Craster & N. Denholm-Young, A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, Oxford 1937, Vol.II, Part II, pp. 778-780 (no.3896).
6. Ethel Seaton, Sir Richard Roos, Lancastrian Poet, London 1961, pp. 83-85.

Material:

Vellum.

Size:

16.6 by 23.1 cms.

Binding:

Early nineteenth century calf binding.

Number of Leaves:

343 plus 2 paper fly-leaves. (Although the Summary Catalogue

6.

claims 340 and Miss Hammond 336.)

Pagination:

In pencil in a modern hand in the top right-hand corner of each recto. The first fly-leaf and the first vellum page are numbered i and ii, and then the pages are numbered 1-335 (199 and 199*). At the end several pages are left unnumbered, and the sixth page after f. 335 is wrongly numbered 340.

Collation:

In eights (2⁶, 3⁹, 24⁴, 43⁷, 44⁵).

A single leaf (f. 14), illuminated on the verso, was added at the beginning of the third gathering, and the recto of f. 15 has an illuminated border and capital. The stub of this single leaf can be seen at the end of the gathering, between folios 22 and 23. In the 24th gathering sewing can be seen between the first two leaves, while the other two appear to be gummed. The fifth folio of gathering 43 seems to have been cut out (between ff. 333 and 334). It is difficult to see how the final gathering is made up - sewing appears between ff. 338 and 339.

Catchwords:

These occur regularly at the end of each gathering on the versos of folios 22, 30, 38, 46, 54, 62, 70, 78, 86, 94, 102, 110, 118, 126, 130, 134, 142, 150, 158, 166, 174, 182, 184, 185, 194, 209, 217, 225, 233, 241, 249, 257, 265, 273, 281, 289 and 297. The

sequence is scarcely interrupted except where there is a blank page at the end of a gathering, or where lines have been added in a later hand.

Signatures:

Traces can still be seen on folios 151-4, 188, 190 and 195-6.

Contents:

1. ff. 15a-19a. Chaucer's Complaint of Mars. Brown & Robbinsⁱ
no. 913.

-
- i. C Brown & R.H. Robbins, The Index of Middle English Verse,
New York 1943.
-

2. ff. 19a-20b. Chaucer's Complaint of Venus. Brown & Robbins
no. 3542.
 3. ff. 20b-30a. Lydgate's Complaint of the Black Knight or
Complaint of a Lover's Life. Brown & Robbins no. 1507.
 4. ff. 30a-32a. Chaucer's Complaint of Anelida (see Item 5).
 5. ff. 32a-35a. Chaucer's Anelida and Arcite, lacking Anelida's
Complaint. Brown & Robbins no. 3670.
 6. ff. 35b-39b. The Book of Cupid or The Cuckoo and the
Nightingale, possibly by Clanvoweⁱⁱ. Brown & Robbins no. 3361.
-

- ii. See W.W. Skeat, Chaucerian and Other Pieces, Oxford 1897,
pp. lvii-lxi, where the question of Clanvowe's authorship

is discussed, and R.H. Robbins, "The Findern Anthology" in PMLA LXIX (1954), p.630, where Skeat's conclusions are questioned.

7. f. 40a. Chaucer's Truthⁱ. Brown & Robbins no. 809.
-

i. See below, p. 12 Item 34 and p. 18.

8. ff. 40a-47a. Hoccleve's Letter of Cupid, Brown & Robbins no. 666.

9. ff. 47a-50a. The Rolles of King Ragman.ⁱⁱ Brown & Robbins no. 2251.
-

ii. See Thomas Wright, Anecdota Literaria, London 1844, pp. 81-88, Where the use of these stanzas in a fortune-telling game is described, and the text printed. See also below, Item 16 and p. 19 for another set of stanzas used for fortune-telling.

10. ff. 50b-62b. Sir Richard Ros's La Belle Dame sans Mercy. Brown & Robbins no. 1086.

11. ff. 63a-82b. Lydgate's Temple of Glas. Brown & Robbins no. 851.

12. ff. 83a-119b. Chaucer's Legend of Good Women. Brown & Robbins no. 100.

13. ff. 120a-129b. Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls. Brown & Robbins no. 3412.
14. ff. 130a-147b. Chaucer's Book of the Duchess. Brown & Robbins no. 1306.
15. ff. 147b-148a. Envoy to Alison, beg. "O Lewde boke with thy foole rudenesse", three 7-line stanzas and a 6-line envoy. Brown & Robbins no. 2479.
16. ff. 148a-154a. The Chaunces of the Dyce, beg. "First myn vnkunnyng and my rudenesse". Brown & Robbins no. 803.
17. ff. 154b-183b. Chaucer's House of Fame. Brown & Robbins no. 991.
18. ff. 184a-185b. The Ten Commandments of Love, beg. "Certes ferre extendeth yet my reason". Brown & Robbins no. 590.
19. ff. 187a-188b. Chaucer's Complaint unto Pity. Brown & Robbins no. 2756.
20. ff. 188b-191a. Chaucer's A.B.C. Brown & Robbins no. 239.
21. ff. 192a-b. Chaucer's Fortune. Brown & Robbins no. 3661.
22. ff. 192b-193a. Chaucer's Envoy to Scogan. Brown & Robbins no. 3747.
23. ff. 193a-b. Chaucer's Complaint to his Purse. Brown & Robbins no. 3787.
24. ff. 193b-194a. Chaucer's Envoy to Bukton. Brown & Robbins no. 2262.
25. ff. 194a-b. Chaucer's Lak of Stedfastnesse. Brown & Robbins no. 3190.
26. ff. 194b-195a. Against Women Unconstant, perhaps by

Chaucer, beg. "Madame that throgh your newfangelnesse".

Brown & Robbins no. 2029.

27. ff. 195a-b. Four stanzas beg.

a). "Deceyt disceyveth and shal be deceyved" (Lydgate's Fall of Princes, Bk. II, lines 4432-8). Brown & Robbins no. 674.

b). "Wurship women wyne vnweldy age"ⁱ, with the rubric 'Quatuor infatuant / honor / etas / femina / vinum'. Brown & Robbins no. 4230.

i. See E.P. Hammond, "Two British Museum Manuscripts" in Anglia xxviii (1905) p. 21, where Miss Hammond refers to other manuscript copies of this stanza and the combinations in which it occurs.

c). "The worlde so wide thaire so remuable". Brown & Robbins no. 3504.

d). "The more I goo the ferther I am behinde". Brown & Robbins no. 3437.ⁱⁱ

ii. See Skeat ed., Chaucer's Works, Vol. I, pp. 48, 52 and 57, and p.52 note 2. Shirley attributed both stanzas to one 'Halsham' (MS. Brit. Mus. Add. 16165), but both occur as part of longer poems by Lydgate (see H.N. MacCracken ed., Lydgate's Minor Poems, EETS ^{CXCII} ~~192~~, 1934, pp. 734-8 and 832-4). For

further discussion of these stanzas see H.P. South, "The Question of Halsam" in PMLA L (1935), pp. 362-371 and C.F. Bühler, "Lydgate's Horse, Sheep and Goose & Huntington MS. H.M. 144" in MLN LV (1940), pp. 568-9 and notes 11 and 12. Of their popularity Dr. Flügel writes ("Kleinere Mitteilungen aus Handschriften", Anglia XIV (1892), p. 463 note 1): "Sie waren sehr populär, finden sich in vielen hdschriften, wurden von Caxton gedruckt, und noch unter Heinrich VIII als dreistimmige lieder bearbeitet."

28. f. 195b. Two Proverbs, each consisting of two couplets but written without a break, attributed to Chaucer, beg. "What shul these clothes thus manyfolde" and "Of al this worlde the large compace". Brown & Robbins no. 3914.
29. ff. 195b-197a. A Complaint against Hope, beg. "As I stoode in studyinge alloone".ⁱ Brown & Robbins no. 370.
-

i. See Kenneth G. Wilson, The Complaint Against Hope: An Edition, University of Michigan Contributions in Modern Philology no 21, Ann Arbor 1957.

30. ff. 197a-198b. Complaynt d'Amours, perhaps by Chaucer, beg. "I whiche that am the sorwfullest man". Brown & Robbins no. 1388.

31. ff. 198b-199a. Hoccleve's Virelai to Henry V. Brown & Robbins no. 3854.
32. ff. 199a-199*b. Lydgate's Doublenesse. Brown & Robbins no. 3656.
33. ff. 199*b-200b. Lydgate's Prayer for King, Queen and People. Brown & Robbins no. 2218.
34. f. 201a. Chaucer's Truth.ⁱ Brown & Robbins no. 809.

i. See above, p. 8, Item 7 and below, p. 18.

35. ff. 202a-300a. Lydgate's Reson and Sensuallyte. Brown & Robbins no. 3746. The work is unfinished, and ff. 300b-305a left blank.
36. ff. 306a-312b. How a Lover Praiseth his Lady, beg. "When the Son the laumpe of heuen ful lyght". Brown & Robbins no. 4043. This is the only manuscript copy listed by Brown & Robbins, and according to them it has not been printed.
37. ff. 314a-317b. The 'Venus Mass', sometimes attributed to Lydgate. Brown & Robbins no. 4186.
38. f. 318a. Balade, 3 stanzas beg. "To fle the sect of alle mysghovernaunce". Brown & Robbins no. 3752.
39. f. 318a-b. Balade, 4 stanzas beg. "And as for yow that most ar in my mynde". Brown & Robbins no. 296.
40. ff. 318b-319a. Balade, 3 stanzas beg. "O lord god what yt is gret plesaunce". Brown & Robbins no. 2488.

41. f. 319a. Compleynt, 4 stanzas beg: "Now lyst fortune thus
for me to purueye". Brown & Robbins no. 2349.
42. f. 319b. Compleynt, 3 stanzas beg: "Knelyng allon ryght thus
I may make my wylle". Brown & Robbins no. 1826.
43. ff. 320a-b. Lettyr, 4 stanzas beg: "Ryght goodly to whom
I owe seruyse". Brown & Robbins no. 2823.
44. f. 320b. Compleynt, 3 stanzas beg: "O wofull hert
prisoned in gret duressse". Brown & Robbins no. 2583.
45. f. 321a. Compleynt, 4 stanzas beg: "O thou Fortune whiche
hast the gouernaunce", Brown & Robbins no. 2567.
46. f. 321b. Compleynt, 3 stanzas beg: "O cruell daunger all
myn aduersarye". Brown & Robbins no. 2407.
47. f. 322a. Compleynt, 4 stanzas beg: "Now must I nede
part out of your presence". Brown & Robbins no. 2350.
48. f. 322a-b. Compleynt, 3 stanzas beg: "What shuld me
cause or any wyse to thynk". Brown & Robbins no. 3915.
49. f. 322b. Compleynt, 4 stanzas beg: "Walkyng allon of
wyt full desolat". Brown & Robbins no. 3860.
50. ff. 323a-b. Supplicacioun, 3 stanzas beg: "Besechyth mekly
in ryght lowly wyse". Brown & Robbins no. 509.
51. ff. 323b-324a. Lettyr, 3 stanzas beg: "Myn hertys Ioy
and all myn hole plesaunce". Brown & Robbins no. 2182.
52. f. 324a. Compleynt, 3 stanzas beg: "The tyme so long
the peyn ay more and more". Brown & Robbins no. 3488.
53. ff. 324a-b. Compleynt, 3 stanzas beg: "What shall I
say to whom schall I complayn". Brown & Robbins no. 3913.

54. f. 324b. Lettyr, 4 stanzas beg. "My best bylouyd lady and maistresse". Brown & Robbins no. 2230.
55. f. 325a. Compleynt, 5 stanzas beg. "Not far fro marche in the ende of feuryere". Brown & Robbins no. 2295.
56. ff. 325b-327a. How the louere is sett to serve the floure. Brown & Robbins no. 2178.
57. ff. 327a-329a. The Parliament of Cupid Brown & Robbins no. 2595.ⁱ
-
- i. For a discussion of the identity of the author of items 38 to 57 see H.N. MacCracken, "An English Friend of Charles of Orleans" in PMLA XXVI (1911), pp. 142-180, where they are attributed to the Earl of Suffolk, and Ethel Seaton, op.cit. pp. 170ff. where they are attributed to Sir Richard Ros. See also C.L. Kingsford, Prejudice and Promise in XVth Century England, Oxford 1925, pp. 175-176.
-
58. ff. 329b-330a. 'A remembraunz off þe articles perteyning to þe ordyr off rodys' (with the last word crossed out and 'Heraults' written after it). Seven prose paragraphs describing in general terms the duties of a knight.ⁱⁱ
-
- ii. The island of Rhodes was for nearly 220 years in the possession of the Knights of St. John, who lost it to Solyman the Magnificent in 1522. See H.E. Collett & Capt. E.C.B. Merriman, The Knights Hospitallers, ^{London} ~~pub. W.H. Smith & Son~~, 1920, pp. 23-43.
-
59. ff. 330b-332b. Lydgate's Kings of England, Brown & Robbins no. 3632.

A contemporary list of contents on ff. 2a-b reads:

[T]he complaynt of Mars & Venus

[T]he complaynt of Mars by himself

[T]he complaynt of Venus by herself

The complaynt of a lovers lyue

The complaynt of Analida þe qwene of ermony

The complaynt of fayre analida and fals Arcytt

The boke off Cupyde Gode of Love

The goode counsell of Chaucer

The Letter of Cupyde Gode of love

The Rolles of King Ragman

La **bele** dame sanz mercy

The Temple off Glasse

The boke of the IX goode women

The Parliament of Bryddes

The Boke of the Duches

The Chaunces of the dyce

The house of Fame

The Compleynt of the dethe of pety

a devoute balette to oure lady

The arguying between a man and the qween of Fortune

The sendyng of Chawcer to Scogan

The complaynt of Chawcer to his purse

The sendyng of Chawcer to Bukton

The complaynt of the Vnstedfastnes of þe worlde

The newfangilnes of a lady

4.

The iiii thinges that make men to fonde
The proverbe of Chawcer
The complaynte ageyne hope
The complaynt of a lover
The supplicacoun to þe kyng in balayd wise
Off the vareaunce of þis world saving in women
The prayoure to God to kepe the king þe qwene þe peopull and his
lande
The booke of þe Autoure how he plaid at þe Chesse and was mated
of a Feerse
How þat a louer presythe his lady
The Observaunce of Venus Goddes of Love
The iii balettes þat þe lover made to his lady
The ii complayntez þat þe lovere made to his lady
A letter þat þe louer made to his lady
The vii. complayntez þat þe lover made to his lady
The Supplicacoun that the lover mad to his lady
The letter þat the louere made to his lady
ii. complayntez þat þe louere made to his lady
A letter and a complaynt that þe louere made to his lady
How þe louere is sett to serve þe floure
The parliament off Cupyde Gode of Love

Here the original list ends, but added in a seventeenth
century hand are:

The solemne service of a lover to his lady

The orison and Epistle in prose with other Balads
 Articles pertayninge to þe knights of þe Rhodes
 Reigns of þe kings of Englund til temps H. VI

One other item has been added to the list in a late sixteenth or early seventeenth century hand, this is "ye 10 Commaundments of Loue" immediately after 'The house of Fame'. Some other sixteenth century additions to the list, denoting authorship or a more familiar title, are: "per T. hockleve" after 'The Letter of Cupyde' in a hand rather like the one which added "ye 10 Commaundments of Loue", or which might possibly be Stow on a different occasion from when he made his other notes, and using a different quillⁱ; "lidgate" (added by Stow) after 'The Temple off Glasse'; ".a.b.c. per Chaucer" (Stow) after 'a devoute balette to oure lady'; and "the blake knyght" (Stow) after 'The complaynt of a lovers lyue'.

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- i. John Stow (c. 1525-1605) the antiquarian. Reproductions of his handwriting are to be found in W.W. Greg, English Literary Autographs 1550-1650, Oxford 1932, Vol. III, Plate LXVIII. Stow produced an edition of Chaucer and the work of other mediaeval poets in 1561, and later provided some of the material for Speight for his edition of 1598. Several surviving manuscripts of Middle English verse (including the Trinity College, Cambridge MS R. 3. 19) contain notes and additions in his hand. Further details of Stow's life are given by Greg in his notes to Plate LXVIII.

For a reference to this particular addition see F.J. Furnival
 ed., Hoccleve's Works, EETS Extra Series LXI, ^{London} 1892, p.72.

Condition:

The manuscript is well preserved: there seem to have been no losses and only one leaf, folio 30, has had to be repaired because it started to come loose.

The text of La Belle Dame sans Mercy is disarranged as in the Harley MS 372, and the order of the lines is as follows: 1-428, 669-716, 525-572, 477-524, 621-668, 573-620, 429-476, 717-856. Since the disarranged passages are all six stanzas in length, they must originally have been displaced in some MS having three stanzas to a side (six stanzas to a leaf), in which several leaves were misplaced and wrongly folded after the gathering had been written. Skeat demonstrates how this could account for the present order of the lines in his discussion of the poem.ⁱ

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- i. W.W. Skeat ed., Chaucerian and Other Pieces, Oxford 1897, pp. li-lvii. *See also below, pp. 36 and 133.*
-

A large number of pages (ff. ii, 1, 3-8, 9b-14a, 186, 201b, 300b, 305, 313, 333-341) are left blank; a fact which, together with other considerations, leads Miss Hammond to suggestⁱⁱ that the scribe copied from several different manuscripts to make up this one volume. The presence of two copies of Chaucer's Truth supports this theory: very likely in copying another set of poems from a different exemplar the scribe failed to notice that he was also transcribing a short poem already copied from another source.

-
- ii. E.P. Hammond, Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual, New York 1933, p. 335.
-

The pages have been considerably trimmed, and the majority of signatures have disappeared; lines written in the side margins are also sometimes partly cut away (as, for example, on folio 267b where part of the first word of a line inserted in the margin is missing).

Layout of Page:

There are between 32 and 40 lines to a page, with marginal and running titles. The page was apparently pricked at the four corners (see, for example, folio 202), although the pricking has in most cases been trimmed away from the top of the page.

Frame lines ruled in brown crayon enclose an area of 9.4 by 15.2 cms.

A small oblique stroke is used to indicate the caesura.

Red and blue are used for ornamental capital letters; proper names are sometimes underlined in red and rubrics are frequent. Folios 148b-154a containing The Chaunces of the Dyce have groups of three dice drawn against each stanza, so that the poem can be used for a sort of fortune telling.¹

1. For further details see E.P. Hammond, "The Chaunce of the Dice" in Englische Studien LIX, (1925) pp.1-16., and for a similar idea in A Political Prophecy by the Dice see R.H. Robbins, Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, New York, 1959, p.120.

See also above, p. 8 Item 10, for another set of verses used in fortune telling, though not in this case involving the use of dice.

On folio 14b at the beginning of The Complaint of Mars there is an elaborate illumination representing Mars, Venus and Jupiter. The coat of arms which forms part of the border is fully described by Miss Hammondⁱ. The illumination is no. 315 in the 'Hand List of English Illuminated MSS' drawn up by Eric G. Millarⁱⁱ, and is reproduced by Saxl and Meierⁱⁱⁱ and also by Brusendorff^{iv}.

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- i. E.P. Hammond, Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual, New York 1933, p. 334.
 - ii. E.G. Millar, English Illuminated MSS of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, Paris and Brussels 1928, p. 93.
 - iii. Fritz Saxl und Hans Meier, Verzeichnis Astrologischer und Mythologischer illustrierter Handschriften des Lateinischen Mittelalters. III Handschriften in Englischen Bibliotheken. Herausgegeben von Harry Bober. London 1953. Vol. I, pp. 382-3, Vol. II, Tafel VI, Abb. 18.
 - iv. A. Brusendorff, The Chaucer Tradition, London and Copenhagen 1925, Plate III, facing p. 264. This is a less clear reproduction, but shows more of the border than that in Saxl and Meier.
-

On folio 9a there is a later, rather faded sketch of an Elizabethan lady.

Handwriting:

The hand is firm and compact, with rather thick strokes and rounded loops to the ascenders of b, d, h and l, especially d. The letter g resembles a figure 8. There are three forms of r:

the modern form, the z- or 2-shaped r and an occasional long r. Long s and sigma s, and a form with two loops, something like a small, modern, longhand b are used. The first stroke of the letter y is nearly always longer than the second, and occasionally develops into the b-form, while w- is usually written in the simplified modern form.

For a reproduction of a leaf from this manuscript see W.W. Skeat ed., Chaucer's Works, Vol. III, 2nd. Edition, Oxford, 1900, frontispiece, and W.W.Skeat, Twelve Facsimiles of Old English Manuscripts, Oxford, 1892, Plate X.

Correction:

The title and colophon of The Temple of Glas, given in this manuscript as The Temple of Bras, have been corrected by Stow, who has also inserted line 320 of this poem and corrected line 96, which had been inserted along with ll. 154 and 216 by another sixteenth century hand. Many lines have been added in the margin to Lydgate's Reson and Sensuallyte, in a bold, clear hand, not much later than that of the scribe and very similar to that of the table of contents.ⁱ

i. See Dr. Sieper, op. cit. where it is suggested that they may have been written in by Shirley himself, and the Summary Catalogue, p. 779, where it is also noted that "missing lines have been supplied, perhaps by Shirley". The hand is certainly something like that of the Shirley MS, British Museum Additional, 16165,

particularly as seen in the formal headings. For details of the life and work of John Shirley (d. 1456) see A. Brusendorff, The Chaucer Tradition, London and Copenhagen 1925, pp. 42-43, 207-236 and 453-471; E.P. Hammond, English Verse between Chaucer and Surrey, London 1927, pp. 191-197; and G.S. Ivy, The Make-Up of Middle English Verse Manuscripts, University of London doctoral dissertation (1953) pp. 375-380.

Lines have also been supplied in a seventeenth century hand in The Book of the Duchessⁱ, and this same hand has added lines to The House of Fame and inserted The Ten Commandments of Love on leaves left blank by the scribe.

- i. W.W. Skeat in his Introduction to The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and Others, being a reproduction in facsimile of the first collected edition of 1532 from the copy in the British Museum, London 1905, p. xxxiii para. 24, says that the 65 lines added here to The Book of the Duchess were copied from the Thynne edition of 1532 with only slight variations, all of them for the worse. Thynne is said to be the sole authority for these lines.
-

Other Marginalia:

On the flyleaf in a hand apparently contemporary is written the date 'Anno 1450'. Following this are these notes by Charles

Fairfax:

"I bought this att Gloucester / 8 Sept. 1650 Fairfax
intendinge to exchange itt for a better booke

Note yt Joseph Holland hath another of thes Manuscript".

Throughout the manuscript there are many notes of title or authorship in Stow's hand. He has also made notes about the subject matter of some lines and stanzas: for example, in The Book of the Duchess he has underlined the word 'white' several times and written 'blanche' beside it in the margin. On folio 147a he has written 'she is dede'; on folio 130a after the rubricated title 'The booke of the Duchesse' is written "...made by Geffrey Chawcyer at ye request of ye duke of lancastar: piteously complaynyng the deathe of ye sayd dutchesse blanche" in a hand which could possibly be that of Stow, writing larger than usual, although the spelling also differs rather from his usual practice. On folio 149a, beside the 6th stanza of The Chaunces of the Dice, Stow has identified a reference to the church of St. Andrew Undershaftⁱ.

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- i. In his Survey of London, ed. C.L. Kingsford, Oxford 1908, Vol. I pp. 99 and 143-5, Stow writes about the church of St. Andrew Undershaft and quotes this stanza beg. "Ryght wel alofte and hye ye bere youre hede", attributing it to Chaucer. It was in this church that Stow himself was buried.
-

On folio 82b Stow has written "here lackethe .6. leues that are in Josephe hollands boke", which perhaps prompted Fairfax's

note on the fly-leaf.ⁱ

- i. See Schick op. cit. p. xix for a comment on Stow's note, and J.M. Manly & E Rickert, The Text of the 'Canterbury Tales', Chicago 1940, Vol. I p. 182, where it is argued that Cambridge University Manuscript Gg. 4. 27 is likely to be the manuscript referred to as "Josephe hollands boke". Robert A. Caldwell, 'Joseph Holand (sic), Collector & Antiquary' in Modern Philology XL (1943) pp. 295-301, also argues that Camb. Univ. MS Gg. 4. 27 once belonged to Holland (see p. 299 note 38).
-

There are also numerous small crosses in the margins, probably made by Stow and indicating that he doubted the accuracy of a line, or had another copy by him which gave a different reading. In La Belle Dame sans Mercy these crosses occur opposite lines 256, 475, 516, 587, 683, 842.

The note hic caret versu occurs several times in the margin (for example on folios 89a, 103a, 180b and 181b) in a hand very like that of the scribe himself. He seems to have been conscious of the omission of lines in his exemplar without having another text from which to supply them.

On folio 120a beside the first line of The Parliament of Fowls a seventeenth century hand, rather like that of Fairfax as seen on the fly-leaf, has written the Latin text for the line, Ars longa vita brevis.

On folio 332b, opposite the line "By iust tytle born by Enherytaunce" in the stanza on Henry VI in Lydgate's Kings of England, the word Negatur is written in a seventeenth century hand.

Many of the folios at the beginning of the book, originally left blank by the scribe, were later written on by people owning the book or having access to it. Unfortunately most of these scribblings are now illegible; three signatures towards the end of the book, on folio 333b, are still just discernible, however. These are of Robert Wingfield, with the date 14 Octobris 1612; Oly Nicholas, similarly dated 8~~bris~~ 14~~to~~ 1612; and Ferdinando Knyghtley, above which last name are the words Arma virumque cano, and very faintly beneath it Eadem die.

History:

The manuscript was apparently made for Lord Stanley by a good professional scribe, as the evidence of the coat of arms in the border of the illumination suggests. From the Stanley family it may have come into the possession of the Wingfields, as Dr. Seaton suggestsⁱ in her comments on the signatures transcribed above.

i. Ethel Seaton, op. cit. pp. 84-85.

The manuscript at some time passed through Stow's hands, although he did not necessarily own it. In the mid-seventeenth

century, as we know from the fly-leaf, it came into the possession of Charles Fairfax. From him it passed to his nephew, Sir Thomas Fairfax, who in turn bequeathed it in 1671, together with various other MSS, to the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Date:

The evidence of the script, and the note on the fly-leaf, indicates that the manuscript was written c. 1440-1450.

Materials:

Paper.

Watermarks:

Six different watermarks occur in the manuscript. They are:
1. Shears, something like Briquet¹ no. 3505 (1446), but not very similar.

1. G.M. Briquet, Les Filigranes. 2nd. ed., Leipzig, 1925.

2. A bunch of grapes, very similar to Briquet no. 13041 (1473-1502). This mark occurs only on folio 26, which is also shorter than the other leaves (see below, p. 29).

3. A ring, not in Briquet where the nearest is no. 689, the mark in this manuscript being more gracefully proportioned. It is

H.

Harley 372

British Museum

Previous Descriptions:

1. A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum, London, 1808, Vol. I, p. 217.
2. E.P. Hammond, Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual, New York, 1933, pp. 328-329.
3. E. Seaton, Sir Richard Roos, Lancastrian Poet, London, 1961, p. 83.

Material:

Paper.

Watermarks:

Six different watermarks occur in the manuscript. They are:

1. Shears, something like Briquet¹ no. 3665 (1446), but not very similar.

- i. C.M. Briquet, Les Filigranes, 2nd. ed., Leipzig, 1923.

2. A bunch of grapes, very similar to Briquet no. 13041 (1473-1502). This mark occurs only on folio 26, which is also shorter than the other leaves (see below, p. 28).
3. A ring, not in Briquet where the nearest is no. 689, the mark in this manuscript being more gracefully proportioned, It is

similar in size and shape to Beazeleyⁱ no. 166 (Vol. I).

i. Beazeley's Tracings of Watermarks at Canterbury, Brit. Mus. Additional MSS. 38637-38642.

4. Bull, similar to Briquet nos. 2782 and 2783 (1446-1448).
5. A bull's head surmounted by a star, similar to Briquet nos. 15043 and 15044 (1452 and 1455) but not corresponding in size.
6. The watermark of folio 114 is difficult to see; it is perhaps a shield, but I have not been able to identify it more closely.

Size:

20.6 by 29.7 cms. (Folio 26: 20.6 by 29.1 cms.)

Binding:

Modern.

Number of Leaves:

114 leaves plus 3 later paper fly-leaves at the beginning and 3 at the end of the volume.

Pagination:

The leaves are numbered 1 to 114 in the top right hand corner on the recto of each folio in pencil in a modern hand. At the top right hand corner of folios 86 and 106 are the numbers 'cc' and 'ccxx', apparently contemporary with the writing of the

manuscript.

Collation:

The gatherings are difficult to distinguish and somewhat irregular, perhaps because of the way in which the manuscript is made up.

The British Museum Catalogue of the Harleian MSS, the relevant part of which was compiled between the years 1708 and 1726 by Humphrey Wanley, describes this manuscript as "A Book in fol. consisting of two old Books, bound up together, with some Additions..." Presumably the two books were originally 1). folios 1-70, which seem all to be the work of one scribe with the possible exception of f. 70ⁱ, and contain poems by Lydgate and Chaucer, and 2). folios 71-112, which contain part of Hoccleve's De Regimine Principum, in the hand of a different scribe.

i. See E.P. Hammond, op. cit. p. 328, where it is said to be in a different hand. It seems to me to be in the same hand as the rest of this section, only written more rapidly: one or two small omissions, afterwards corrected by the scribe, indicate a certain haste.

The additions referred to may well be the incomplete folios 113 and 114, each the work of a different scribe, which have been trimmed down each side and pasted along fresh strips of paper at the inner edge. This strip of paper was then bound in with the

rest of the manuscript in the usual way. Both folios 113 and 114 are creased as if they have at one time lain folded. The paper of folio 114 is quite different from that used in the rest of the volume.

The dirt and discolouration of folios 1a, 44b, 45a, 56b, 57a and 70b indicate that the first part of the present volume was originally further divided into 3 sections, 1). ff. 1-44, 2). ff. 45-56, 3). ff. 57-70, and lay unbound in these separate sections for some time.

The first sewing which can be seen lies between folios 10 and 11, suggesting a large first gathering of 20 folios, which the watermarks confirm. Sewing can next be seen between folios 24 and 25, indicating a second gathering of 8 folios (ff. 21-28); the watermarks are irregular, however, and this second gathering is presumably made up of single folios, with the possible exception of the outside sheet making folios 21 and 28. The next visible sewing lies between folios 42 and 43, and as this section of the manuscript probably ended at folio 44 (see above), this would indicate a short final gathering of 4 folios (41-44), designed to give the scribe just sufficient paper to finish the work in progress. The watermarks are again partly irregular, indicating that the outer leaves (ff. 41 and 44) consist of one sheet, and the inner two (ff. 42 and 43) of single folios. This leaves folios 29-40 unaccounted for, and since no sewing can be seen the only evidence for the way in which they are collated is that given by the watermarks, which suggest two regular gatherings of 6

(ff. 29-34 and 35-40).

Sewing can be seen again between folios 50 and 51, indicating a gathering of twelve folios, which exactly coincides with the second section, ff. 45-56 (see above p.30). In this case the evidence of the sewing is confirmed by that of the watermarks and of the only set of contemporary signatures preserved in this manuscript (see below p.32)

The third section (ff. 57-70) in this part of the manuscript seems to be one gathering of 14, since sewing appears between folios 63 and 64, and this is confirmed by the watermarks.

Gatherings in the first part of the manuscript, originally a separate book, are: 1^{20} (ff. 1-20); 2^8 (ff. 21-28); 3^6 (ff. 29-34); 4^6 (ff. 35-40); 5^4 (ff. 41-44); 6^{12} (ff. 45-56); 7^{14} (ff. 57-70).

Evidence for the collation of the second book in this composite volume has so far defied analysis. Sewing can be seen at folios 72/73, 77/78, 87/88, 91/92, 97/98, 106/107, 110/111. Catchwords occur on folios 87b and 107b. Dry point ruling is on the recto of folios 71-77, verso of folios 78-87, recto of folios 88-97, verso of folios 98-107, recto of folios 108-110 and verso of folios 111-112. The loss of leaves at the beginning of the book (see below pp.35-6) makes it more difficult to distinguish the first of these gatherings; there is also the possibility that other sewing exists which cannot be seen because of the tightness of the binding. That sewing is not always a reliable guide to collation can be seen from the Longleat MS 258 where sewing does not appear at the centre of each gathering but at

intervals of 6 folios (see below p. 45). The Cambridge Univ. MS Ff. 1. 6 also shows some unusually constructed gatherings, in which smaller gatherings are inserted between the leaves of a larger gathering (see ~~below p. 45~~, and R.H. Robbins, "The Findern Anthology" in PMLA LXIX, (1954) p. 619).

Catchwords:

Catchwords are used only three times throughout the manuscript, at ff. 87b, 107b, and 114a, and do not seem to help in any way to determine the size and construction of the gatherings.

Signatures:

Only one set of signatures survives, numbers 1 to 6 in Arabic numerals on folios 45a to 50a. These support the evidence of the sewing for a gathering of 12 folios at ff. 45-56 (see above p. 31).

Contents:

1. ff. 1a-44b. Lydgate's Life of St. Edmund and St Fremund, Brown & Robbins' no. 3440. (Nine stanzas of the Prologue come at the end (ff. 43b-44b) after the Envoy and the 'Prayer to the King'. The tenth stanza of the Prologue and the Latin prayer as printed by Horstmannⁱⁱ are lacking in this MS.)

i. C. Brown and R.H. Robbins, op. cit.

ii. C. Horstmann, Sammlung Altenglischer Legenden, Heilbronn, 1878, p. 378.

2. ff. 45a-51a. The Marriage of Senex and Puella, perhaps by Lydgate, beg: "A philisophyre a good clerk seculer", Brown & Robbins no. 86.
3. ff. 51a-53b. Lydgate's Kings of England, beg: "Froom tyme of brute auctours do specefye", Brown & Robbins no. 882. This is a revised version of the text given in MS Fairfax 16, Item 59, with 15 introductory stanzas.
4. ff. 54a-55a. Lydgate's Exhortacion of the Crucifix, beg: "Man to refourme thyn exil & thi los", Brown & Robbins no. 2081.
5. ff. 55a-55b. Gaude flore virginali, beg: "Ioy blissid lady with pure virgynal floure", Brown & Robbins no. 1804.
6. f. 56a. A Prayer to St. Sebastian, 7 stanzas in rhyme royal beg: "Blessid Sebastian goddes martir and knyght", with the Latin text parallel in a second column. Brown & Robbins no. 537.
7. ff. 57a-60b. Chaucer's Anelida and Arcite, Brown & Robbins no. 3670. This copy ends with the last stanza of the 'Complaint', thus lacking one stanza.
8. ff. 61a-69b. Sir Richard Ros's La Belle Dame sans Mercy, Brown & Robbins no. 1086.
9. ff. 70a-b. Lydgate's Orison to the Blessed Virgin of the Five Joys, beg: "O sterre of Iacob glorye of Israell", Brown & Robbins no. 2556. The sixth stanza, at the bottom of folio 70a, has gaps in the last four lines as if the

copy text was damaged or illegible. ⁱ

i. The nature and position of the contents in this part of the manuscript supports the theory that this book originally lay unbound in three sections (see above pp. 30-1).

10. ff. 71a-112a. Hoccleve's De Regimine Principum, incomplete, beginning at line 3312: "[m]ercy aftir the word of Seynt Austyn", Brown & Robbins no. 2229.

11. f. 113a. A poem against excess in apparel, 6 quatrains beg: "Ye prowde galonttes hertlesse", Brown & Robbins no. 4255.

12. f. 113a. Ten lines of Latin prose describing the qualities necessary in a priest beg: "Gregorius papa posuit a parte in sua praedicacione", to which the British Museum Catalogue gives the title De qualitatibus Sacerdotum, e S. Gregorio Papa 1.ⁱⁱ

ii. E.P. Hammond, op. cit. p. 329, says that f. 113a contains "six quatrains against dress, accompanied by the Latin" but Item 11 is not based on these lines.

13. ff. 114a-b. "The Ballad of Little Gohn Nobody, who (under that Name) libells the Reformation under K. Edward 6th." beg: "In December when the Dayes draw to be short". Printed in the Oxford Book of Light Verse, chosen by W.H.

Auden, Oxford 1938, pp. 83-86, where it is dated c. 1550. The text is a 'corrected' version of that in Bishop Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, ed. H. B. Wheatley, London 1891, Vol. II, pp. 133-137. The text is also printed in the Appendix to John Strype, Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer, Oxford, 1840, (first published 1694), Vol. II, pp. 876-878, where the source is indicated as 'Privati MS'. None of the texts seems, from the nature of the substantive variation, to be printed from the Harley 372 version; they also differ from it in spelling, punctuation and capitalisation.

There is no contemporary list of contents, but on f.56b, which was originally blank, there has been added in a small, late hand of the seventeenth or eighteenth century a list of some of the items written on the preceding folios:

Vita Edmundi

Vita Fremundi consanguinii eius

Mariage of Senex and puella

Catalogue Regum

Condition:

The first part of this manuscript is well preserved, but from the second, originally separate, part 3311 lines have been lost at the beginning of Hoccleve's De Regimini Principum. The contemporary pagination on ff. 86 and 106 gives some clue to the

original shape of the manuscript containing Hoccleve's work. If folio 86 was originally folio 200 of the manuscript to which De Regimine Principum belonged, then the folios 71-85 of our present volume were folios 185 to 199 of the original manuscript, and folios 1 to 184 are now missing. Of these 184 folios at least 60 would carry the missing lines of De Regimine Principum. The scribe who wrote folios 71-112 writes in rather a broad hand, giving only ^{between and} ~~about~~ 24²⁹ lines to a page, without stanza division, whereas the scribe of the earlier part wrote six 8-line stanzas to the page, with a space between each. That is to say that the second scribe needs about twice the number of leaves to do a comparable amount of work to scribe 1.

The present folios 113 and 114 are added fragments (see pp. 29-30 above). Folio 113 is in a small, slightly angular fifteenth century hand, on paper which does not look very different from that of the rest of the manuscript, although there is no watermark to give an indication of the date. Folio 114 is in a much later hand, on paper which is finer.

The text of La Belle Dame sans Mercy has undergone the same disarrangement as in MS Fairfax 16 (see above p. 18). It is now in the order ll. 1-448 (ff. 61a-65a), ll. 669-716 (ff. 65b), ll. 525-572 (f. 66a), ll. 477-524 (f. 66b), ll. 621-668 (f. 67a), ll. 573-620 (f. 67b), ll. 429-476 (f. 68a), ll. 717-856 (ff. 68b-69b). By its nature the disarrangement must have occurred in some common ancestor having only 3 stanzas to a side (see below, p. 133).

The Prayer to St. Sebastian and its Latin parallel on f. 56a

have been crossed out.

Layout of Page:

On folios 1-70 there are 6 stanzas to a page, except on f. 56a which has 7 stanzas, and on folios 71-112 there are between 24 and 29 lines, though fewer on a folio containing a section heading. Folio 113a contains 6 four-line stanzas and 10 lines of Latin; ff. 114a-b 4 eight-line stanzas each.

There are no running titles; the title is usually, though not in all cases, given once, either at the beginning of the poem or in a brief colophon at the end. There are only three references to authorship throughout the manuscript. In the margin of folio 60b, at the end of Anelida and Arcite, the scribe has written "Chaucer". In the margin of folio 61a at the beginning of the poem the same scribe has written: "La Belle dame sanz mercy translatid out of Frenche by ser Richard Ros". In the centre at the top of folio 71a is printed in a later hand "HOCKLINS POEMS". Beneath this is written in a seventeenth or eighteenth century hand, much later than that of the original scribe, on a piece of paper which has been stuck on to the original leaf, "The Author of this Treatise w[as word lost through damage to paper] / Thomas Hoccline. Scholler to / Geffrey Chaucer." This piece of paper covers three lines of text, presumably lines 3309-3311 of De Regimine Principum, beneath it comes the heading De misericordia, in the hand of the scribe who copied the rest of the poem, and the text from

line 3312 onwards. At folio 90b the name is correctly written, in the hand of the text, in a marginal note beside l. 4360 of the poem: "Nota de prodigalitate Thome hoccleue compilatoris huius libri". The only other reference to authorship in the manuscript is the pseudonym "Little John Nobody" used in the title of the last poem in the volume, on folio 114.

The end of a poem is usually indicated merely by the word Finis or Explicit, although at the end of La Belle Dame sans Mercy on f. 69b the poet has written Amen, and then beneath this: "Qui legit emendat scriptorem non reprehendat". This may have been copied from an exemplar, or the scribe may have written it at a point where he originally planned to end his work. The short poem of 7 seven-line stanzas by Lydgate beginning on folio 70a was quite probably added in order to use up the last leaf of the gathering. This and other economical measures, such as making a shorter gathering with just sufficient leaves to finish the work in progress, were often resorted to at a time when paper was mainly imported and expensive.

On folios 1-70 the holes pricked as a guide for ruling can be seen down the outer edge of each folio. Frame lines enclosing an area of 20.8 by 9.8 cms. approx. (ff. 1-56) and 20.7 by 11.6 cms. approx. (ff. 57-70) were ruled, and horizontal lines to indicate stanza division were also ruled, in lead plummet which is now very faded. On folios 71-112 only frame lines in dry point can be seen, enclosing an area of 10.2 by 19.2 cms. approximately.

There is very little decoration in this manuscript. At the beginning of several poems a space and small guide letter has been left for the later insertion of an ornamental capital. These were inserted in only a few cases, and then blue is the only colouring used, while the guide letters are usually still visible beneath the ornamentation. Use is also made of small paragraph signs in either red or blue to draw attention to marginal notes connected with the poems. These marks are not found after f. 52a. The scribe of the first 70 folios frequently embellished his work as he wrote by extending the letter with a flourish into the margin. He also used a small oblique stroke to indicate the caesura of each line.

Handwriting:

The hand of folios 1-70 is a small, fairly neat, vernacular hand of the fifteenth century, only partly cursive. The first 44 folios show some characteristics not found in the rest of these pages, but this probably only indicates that the sections were written, by the same scribe, at different times. On these first 44 folios the serifs of letters in the first and last lines of each page, and the first letter of the first word of each stanza, are often extended into the margin with a flourish, particularly the letter g when it occurs on the bottom line of the page. The letters may also be slightly more current than on the rest of these 70 folios.

The letter a is small and modern in form; the serif of d

is usually a single stroke, but sometimes looped as are those of b, h, and l; two forms of e are found, one very similar to the modern letter and the other rounded with two loops, rather like a small d, a form very common in the fifteenth century; g is made like a y with a flat stroke across the top; i is occasionally marked with a hair-line; three forms of r are used, modern r, the r shaped like a z or 2 and occasionally long r; long s is used, and a form with two loops which looks rather like a small modern b (or the fifteenth century e in reverse) is often used finally; p is still used as well as th; a form of v looking rather like modern b is used; w is usually very close to the modern form, though sometimes the first two strokes are looped.

Folios 71 to 112 are written in a larger, bolder hand than that of the first part of the MS., though still not a very current one. The small modern a is used; the loops of b and l are particularly angular, those of d and h a little rounder; the most common form of r is the rounded z- or 2-shaped form; long s is distinguished by the wide, exaggerated curve of the upper serif, and the sigma form is often used finally; the b form of v is the regular one; w is modern in form. A dot is used to indicate the caesura.

Correction:

There seems to have been no systematic correction of the majority of the manuscript, apart from such correction as the scribe made in the process of copying. The text of La Belle

Dame sans Mercy has been corrected in a neat, early sixteenth-century hand throughout, however. These corrections are taken from either the Pynson or Thynne printed version of the poem (the two agree so closely that it is impossible to determine which), or from a manuscript which Pynson, the earlier of the two printers, followed very closely. The reader can see the evidence of this in the footnotes, where the readings in Harley 372 which are the work of this corrector are given with the sigil H². In only one instance, on folio 62b, at line 148, does the correction of La Belle Dame sans Mercy seem to be in the hand of the original scribe. On folio 59a there is a correction in the same sixteenth century corrector's hand to line 195 of Anelida and Arcite.

Other Marginalia:

The sign nota is used on folio 62b to attract attention to lines 169ff. of La Belle Dame sans Mercy. Notes in a small, thin, sixteenth-century hand, rather like Stow's, on folio 103a are 1) "Chaucer" opposite line 4953 of De Regimine Principum where his name is mentioned, and 2) "his picture shuld be here" opposite line 4995, "Of his persone I have heere his likeliness".

On folio 53b the date 1422 is written after some crossing out. This follows Lydgate's Kings of England, which ends with Henry VI, being the date when Henry VI came to the throne.

On the verso of folio 70, which is blank except for the last stanza of Lydgate's Orison to the Blessed Virgin of the Five Joys

are scribbled in a sprawling late fifteenth or early sixteenth century hand nine lines of Latin. They apparently refer to a form of ^{religious} service, and include the opening words of seven psalms (XXIX, XLII, LIII, LXIX, LXXXV, LXXXVII and CXL).

The open 'a' sign is used to denote stanza division where this is not very clear, as for example on folios 42b, 43a and 44a. The beginning of each stanza of De Regimine Principum is marked by two oblique strokes.

History:

Nothing is known of the history of this manuscript or combination of manuscripts before it was catalogued by Wanley for Lord Harley in the eighteenth century.

Date:

The evidence of script and watermarks suggests that the two major parts of the manuscript belong to the third quarter of the fifteenth century. Folio 113 is probably not much later, while folio 114 was probably copied in the seventeenth century.

L. Longleat 258 Privately Owned.

Previous Descriptions:

1. F.J. Furnivall ed., Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Chaucer Society First Series nos. XXIII & LX, ^{London} 1868-1880, pp. 251 and 253.
2. The Third Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, London 1872, Appendix pp. 188-9.
3. J. Schick ed., Lydgate's Temple of Glas EETS Extra Series ^{London} LX, 1891, pp. xxiv-xxv.
4. E.P. Hammond, "MS Longleat 258 - A Chaucerian Codex" in Modern Language Notes XX, (1905) pp. 77-79.
5. E.P. Hammond, "The Eye and the Heart", Anglia XXXIV, (1911) pp. 235-265.
6. Ethel Seaton, Sir Richard Roos, Lancastrian Poet, London 1961, pp. 92-93.

Material:

Paper and vellum: the outer and inner leaves of each gathering are membrane and the rest are paper, a form of manuscript which is unusual but not unknown.ⁱ Quarto.

- i. F.Wormald and C.E. Wright, The English Library before 1700, London 1958, pp. 38, and 60-61 note 18.

Watermarks:

The watermarks throughout the volume are variations on a bull's head, similar to Briquet nos. 14175 (1403), 14180 (1435-41), 14183 (1458) and 14184 (1460)ⁱ.

i. C.M. Briquet, Les Filigranes, 2nd. ed. Leipzig 1923.

Other variations on this group are found between 1407 and 1479. Similar watermarks are also found in Beazeley Vol. I nos. 156 (1466) and 161 (1466)ⁱⁱ.

ii. Beazeley's Tracings of Watermarks at Canterbury, British Museum Add. MSS 38637-38642.

The paper of the two leaves later inserted into the last gathering is finer than that used throughout the manuscript, and the watermark (a hand surmounted by a star) suggests that it belongs to the first part of the sixteenth century, although neither Briquet nor Beazeley show anything very similar.

Size:

Paper: 22 by 14.1 cms. Vellum: irregular - sometimes the same size as the paper, but often smaller.

Binding:

Modern. Red Morocco.

Number of Leaves:

131, not 147 as Miss Hammond says.ⁱ

i. E.P. Hammond, "MS Longleat 258 - A Chaucerian Codex" in Modern Language Notes XX, (1905) p. 78.

Pagination:

Allowance has been made in the modern pagination for a gap in the MS after folio 32, but not for the leaf missing from La Belle Dame sans Mercy, so that the 131 folios are now numbered 1-32 and 49-147.

Collation:

The manuscript is in gatherings of 16 (6^{15} , 8^{20}) not in eights with the outer sheet vellum and three inner sheets paper, as Miss Hammond saysⁱⁱ.

ii. E.P. Hammond, "The Eye and the Heart", Anglia XXXIV, (1911) p. 235.

The method of sewing is unusual, the stitches appearing not at the centre of each gathering, as would be expected, but after every 6 folios, with the exception of the first three and the ninth sets of sewing, which occur after intervals of 3, 5, 5 and 7 folios respectively.

Catchwords:

None.

Signatures:

These are now difficult to read but the following can be distinguished:

ff. 1-3, 5-8: di-diii, dv-dviii.

ff. 19, 21-23: eiii, ev-evii.

ff. 49-56: ci-cviii.

ff. 65-69, 71-2: fi-fv, fvii-fviii.

ff. 81-87: gi-gvii.

ff. 97-104: hi-hviii.

ff. 112-119: I1-8.

ff. 129-136: k3-kx.

It is probable that the gatherings were numbered and then put ready for writing, the first few gatherings being slightly out of order. Gatherings a and b, now lost, probably contained the poems which, as will be seen later, are missing from this manuscript. (See below under Contents and Condition.)

Contents:

1. ff. 1a-32a Lydgate's Temple of Glas. Brown & Robbinsⁱ
no. 851.
2. f. 32a 3 stanzas by 'Rycharde Hattfielde'. Brown &
Robbins no. 232.

i C. Brown and R. H. Robbins, op. cit.

3. ff. 49a-54b. Chaucer's Complaint of Mars. Brown & Robbins no. 913.
4. ff. 55a-57b. Chaucer's Complaint unto Pity. Brown & Robbins no. 2756.
5. ff. 58a-75b. The Assembly of Ladies. Brown & Robbins no. 1528.
6. ff. 76a-84a. Chaucer's Anelida and Arcite. Brown & Robbins no. 3670.
7. ff. 85a-101a. Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls. Brown & Robbins no. 3412.
8. ff. 102a-119a. The Eye and the Heart. Brown & Robbins no. 1548.
9. ff. 120a-136b. Sir Richard Ros's La Belle Dame sans Mercy. Brown & Robbins no. 1086.
10. ff. 137a-147a. Lydgate's Churl and the Bird. Brown & Robbins no. 2784.

On the verso of the last leaf of the manuscript is a contemporary table of contents in Latin, apparently written by the same scribe:-

Litera directa cupidinis amatoribus

Vnum Carmen

templum vitreum

de folio et flore

Exclamacio Martis

Exclamacio de morte pietatis

Congregacio dominarum

Exclamacio anelide contra arcite

parliamentum avium

de oculo et corde

la bele dame sans mercy

de rustico et aue

Condition:

Three of the twelve poems listed in the contemporary table of contents are now missing, Litera directa cupidinis amatoribus, Vnum Carmen and de folio et flore. There are also six stanzas missing from the beginning of The Complaint of Mars, six from La Belle Dame sans Mercy and two from the end of the Churl and the Bird.

The first two poems, now lost, Hoccleve's Letter of Cupid and Vnum Carmen, probably occupied one of the gatherings, a or b, missing at the beginning of the manuscript (see above, p.46). The 68 stanzas of the Letter of Cupid would take up 11 leaves and the recto of a twelfth leaf, and the unknown Vnum Carmen may well have fitted into the remaining four and a half leaves of the gathering.

The manuscript now starts at folio 1a (modern pagination) with the third poem in the contemporary list of contents, Lydgate's Temple of Glas, which ends on folio 32a with the last two lines and a colophon. Then should come the fourth item in the list of contents, The Flower and the Leaf, but this and the first six stanzas of the following Complaint of Mars are missing.

A note by Henry Bradshaw inserted loose at this point reads:

'The missing quire consisted of 16 leaves, each containing 3 stanzas on a page. The Flower and the Leaf would begin on the first page and end on the last but one, with one stanza only on the page, and the rest of the page and the back of the leaf being blank. The last leaf of the quire contained the first six stanzas of the Compleynte of Mars.'

Thus folios 33-48 are missing, and the manuscript continues on folio 49a with the seventh stanza of the Complaint of Mars. It does not seem to have been noticed previously that there is also a leaf missing from the eighth gathering. This would have stood between folios 128 and 129 as they are now numbered, and contained lines 429-476 of La Belle Dame sans Mercy. The signatures of this gathering show quite clearly that a leaf is missing, and the six stanzas have therefore been lost since the manuscript was written, and were not originally omitted by the scribe.

Stanzas 49 and 50 of The Churl and the Bird are also missing. Evidently the penultimate folio of this last gathering of the MS (originally standing between folios 146 and 147) was lost at the same time as its conjugate which contained the missing lines of La Belle Dame sans Mercy. This eighth and last gathering was originally larger than the rest, presumably to allow the scribe to finish the volume without having to use four folios of a new gathering of 16. The loss of two leaves reduced it in size

from 20 to 18 folios, but a later scribe noticed that six stanzas were missing from the end of the Churl and the Bird and, having inserted a double sheet of paper immediately before folio 147, which contains the eight-line envoy and the colophon, copied on the recto of the first of these two leaves four of the six missing stanzas. The verso of the first sheet and both sides of the second sheet which he inserted were left blank.

The writing is rather faded in some parts of the manuscript, particularly on the vellum leaves.

Layout of Page:

There are three stanzas to a page, and, in non-stanzaic verse, an average of 26 lines to the page.

There are no formal headings or references to authorship, but a later hand has added running titles to most of the poems on the verso of each leaf. There are also brief colophons in the hand of the original scribe.

At the beginning of most of the poems a space has been left for a coloured capital to be inserted, but no illuminating was done.

Handwriting:

The manuscript is written in a vernacular hand of the second half of the fifteenth century. The script is regular and fairly neat, angular and not very current; there is no attempt at decoration. The letter a is small and modern in form; the

ascenders of b, h and l have a small loop, while d usually has a single slanting stroke, but is occasionally looped; the e is modern in form; g is shaped like a y with a line through the top; r is usually z- or 2-shaped; both long s and the s shaped something like a modern longhand b, with two loops, are used; v and w are made with single, not looped, strokes, and the first stroke of each letter is longer than the rest. A feature of this manuscript not found in the other five is the occasional use of brackets as punctuation.

The three stanzas by 'Rycharde Hattfielde' (see above, p.46 Item 2) were inserted by a later hand, possibly by John Thynne to whom the manuscript once belongedⁱ.

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- i. See J. Schick ed., Lydgate's Temple of Glas EETS Extra series LX, ^{London 1891,} p. xxv.
-

Correction:

The same scribe who added the titles in a loose sixteenth century hand is apparently responsible for the few corrections in the manuscript, notably in The Temple of Glas and The Churl and the Bird.

Marginalia:

At the top of folio 1a is written "Constat Johanni Thynne", that is Sir John Thynne (d. 1580) who was the nephew of William

Thynne, the early fifteenth century editor of Chaucerⁱ. Sir John was one of the two overseers of his uncle's will; he was also the builder of Longleat and the direct ancestor of the Marquis of Bath, to whom the manuscript now belongs.

- i. See The Dictionary of National Biography Vol. XIX, Oxford 1921, pp. 845-6.
-

On the verso of the last folio of the manuscript there is an inscription, in very faded writing, beneath the table of contents. With the help of an ultra-violet lamp this is seen to be:

Maister William Thynne/ Clerke of the kechin/ to our
soueraigne lorde/ king henry the viiith/ By Thomas/ Godfray

The relationship between this manuscript and the William Thynne edition of the works of Chaucer, which includes La Belle Dame sans Mercy, is discussed below, pp. 138-9 & 143. Thomas Godfrey was the printer at whose press Thynne's 1532 edition of Chaucer was probably printedⁱⁱ, although very little is known about his work.

- ii. See E.G.Duff, A Century of the English Book Trade, London 1905, p. 56 and Westminster and London Printers, 1476-1535, Cambridge 1906, pp. 156-7.
-

Indications that the manuscript was at one time used as copy text by a printer are found in the various signs which can first be seen on folio 58a and apparently end on folio 113a. The word coll occurs frequently, and there are sequences of numbers (probably indicating pagination) at regular intervals though some of these are now difficult to read.ⁱ

- i. Some references to the connection between this manuscript and various early printed texts are to be found in E. P. Hammond, "MS Longleat 258 - A Chaucerian Codex", in Modern Language Notes XX, (1905) pp. 78 and 79, and in W. W. Skeat, The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and Others, ^{being a reproduction in facsimile of the first collected edition of 1532 from the copy in the British Museum,} ~~(Facsimile of the British Museum copy of Thynne's 1532 edition)~~ London 1905, Introduction p. xli, para. 39.
-

Other marginalia occurring in the MS in late fifteenth or early sixteenth century hands are: Borell(f. 54a); dame de vous on f. 84a at the end of Chaucer's Anelida and Arcite; kyngis (f. 92a); master clerke ys willy (f. 147a); and, towards the bottom of the page, 'Ihu help lady help me' written twice.ⁱⁱ The Churl and the Bird, beginning on f. 137a, is headed '29'.

- ii. Similar inscriptions are fairly common in MSS, see ^{J.M.} Manly & E. Rickert, The Text of the 'Canterbury Tales', Chicago 1940, Vol. I, p. 66.
-

On folio 1a there is an old press mark, IX. D. 76, and also the number 21 in pencil in a modern hand, later crossed out. The verso of the last leaf also has what seems to be an old press mark, a slightly ornamented capital O, but this is very indistinct.

History:

The manuscript was apparently given to William Thynne by Thomas Godfray sometime after 1526, when Thynne became chief clerk of the kitchen, with full control of royal banquetsⁱ. Since then it has been continuously in the Thynne family.

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- i. See The Dictionary of National Biography, VOL. XIX, pp. 853-4, Oxford 1921.
-

Date:

Probably the last quarter of the fifteenth century, on the evidence of the script. This is supported by the watermarks, if we accept M. Briquet's estimate that paper was usually used within fifteen years of its production. Caution is necessary in attempting to date manuscripts on the evidence of watermarks.ⁱⁱ

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- ii. See Curt F. Bühler's article "Watermarks and dates of fifteenth century books" in Studies in Bibliography, Papers of the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, Vol. IX, ^{Charlottesville} 1957. pp. 217-224

T. MS Trinity College, Cambridge, R. 3. 19. (James, 599)

Previous Descriptions:

1. O. L. Triggs ed., The Assembly of Gods, EETS Extra Series LXIX, London 1896, pp. vii-viii.
2. W.W. Skeat ed., Chaucerian and Other Pieces, Oxford 1897, pp. liv-lv, lxxii and lxxiv.
3. W.W. Skeat ed., Chaucer's Minor Poems, 2nd. ed. Oxford 1899, p. 56.
4. M.R. James, The Western Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. A Descriptive Catalogue. Cambridge 1901. Vol. II, no. 599, pp. 69-74.
5. J.M. Manly and E. Rickert, The text of the 'Canterbury Tales', Chicago 1940, Vol. I, pp. 532-534.
6. G.S. Ivy, The Make-Up of Middle English Verse Manuscripts, University of London Doctoral Dissertation Ph. D. Thesis, London (1953) pp. 258-266.
7. E. Seaton, Sir Richard Roos, Lancastrian Poet, London 1961, pp. 93-95.

Material:

Paper.

Watermarks:

There are six, some of which are very close to marks shown

in Briquetⁱ.

i. C.M. Briquet, op. cit.

1. Scissors, varying a little, the nearest in Briquet is no. 3677 (1482-1498).
2. Scissors with letter C, like the Briquet group 3694-3702, all except the first of which belong to the second half of the fifteenth century.
3. The letter P, like Briquet nos. 8601 (1467) and 8651 (?1459).
4. A shield emblazoned with the letter a and surmounted by a crown. Very like Briquet no. 7960 (1476).
5. Standard, very like Briquet no. 5989 (1477-1499).
6. A crown surmounted by what Briquet describes as "une tige, pommée a son extremite"ⁱⁱ, the "tige" having what looks like a letter s or z written across it. Briquet no. 9013 is an example of this latter type of mark without the crown, though the letter in this MS is more likely to be a z as shown in Briquet nos. 9205 and 9206. This variation on a crown is not given in Briquet.

I can find no trace of the watermark Armoiries Pal, Briquet no. 2064 (1464) cited by Manly & Rickert (op. cit. p. 532).

ii. Briquet, op. cit. vol. III, p. 480.

Size:

26.6 by 20.1 cms.

Binding:

Sixteenth or early seventeenth century leather binding, (omitted)
impressed with the Wilmer arms. 1-23

Number of Leaves:

254 plus 2 fly-leaves front and back. (the contents will

Pagination: (ould properly follow folios 1-8, but were misplaced

The pages are numbered in the top right hand corner of
each folio, on the recto, in pencil in a modern hand, 1-255, (23)
the number 215 being omitted. (medieval foliation 32-39)

There are also sequences of fifteenth century Arabic
numerals, written at the foot of each recto. These correspond
with the modern numbering as follows:

<u>Modern</u>	<u>Mediaeval</u>
1-8	1-8
9-16	32-39
17-25	1-9
26-48	1-23
49-54	1-6
55-66	1-12
67-97	1-31
98-113	1-16
114-153	1-40
154-169	9-23 (the number 14 is used twice).
170-204	1-35

205-217 (number 215 omitted)	1-14 (the numbers 11 and 12 omitted)
218-240	1-23
241-247	1-7
248-255	2-9

The mediaeval pagination indicates (and the contents will be seen to support this) that folios 154-169 as they are now numbered should properly follow folios 1-8, but were misplaced when the manuscript was bound. There is also a gap of eight leaves between this misplaced section (mediaeval foliation 9-23) and that which should follow it (medieval foliation 32-39) suggesting that folios 24-31 were lost, either at the time of writing or at some later stage when the manuscript was being bound.

Collation:

In eights (3^9 , 6^7 , 7^6 , 8^{12} , 9^7 , 22^{10} , 23^9 , 27^4 , 30^7 , 31^7).

Catchwords:

These occur on folios 24b, 33b, 41b, 71b, 73b, 81b, 89b, 105b, 121b, 129b, 137b, 145b, 178b, 179b, 187b, 188b, 196b, 212b.

They generally correspond with the end of each gathering, except where there is something unusual about the construction of the gathering, as for example in the third gathering, where the catchword is on f. 24b, although the gathering actually ends with f. 25. This is probably because a single leaf has been

added at the end of the normal eight-leaf gathering in order to complete Chaucer's Parliament Of Fowls: in fact f. 24 was the last leaf of the gathering, until it was decided to add a single leaf on which to finish the poem. Similarly at folio 71b a catchword is inserted before a leaf which is to be cancelled (as indicated by the stub between folios 71 and 72) so that the scribe shall not mistake his place after such an interruption. This ninth gathering of only seven leaves ends with folio 73, where a catchword again appears in its normal place at the end of the gathering.

Signatures:

A few remain but the majority have been trimmed away. Traces can still be seen on folios 19, 43, 44 and 45, 74, 107, 108 and 109, 205 and 206.

A series of signatures has also been added in pencil in a modern hand.

Contents:

1. ff. 1a-b. Festum Natalis Domini (a Christmas pageant?), beg. "[t]ronos celorum Continens/ Whos byrthe thys day Reiterate". Brown & Robbinsⁱ no. 3807. Printed by R.H. Robbins in Secular Lyrics of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, 2nd. ed. Oxford 1955, pp. 110-113 and see also p. 267.

i. C. Brown and R.H. Robbins, op. cit.

2. ff. 2a-b. Eight stanzas in rhyme royal, beg. "[0] beauteuous braunche floure of formosyte". Not listed in Brown & Robbins. Printed by Kenneth G. Wilson in "Five Unpublished Secular Love Poems from MS Trinity College Cambridge 599", Anglia LXXII, ~~Tubingen~~ (1954), pp. 402-404.
3. ff. 2b-3a. Nine 7-line stanzas beg. "[I]n Womanhede as Auctours all wryte". Brown & Robbins no. 1592, where there is said to be no MS extant, but details are given of the first printed version by Stow in 1561 and of the reprint by Chalmers. The first two stanzas are taken from Lydgate's Fall of Princes, Bk. IV, ll. 2374-2443, the word women being substituted for princessis in line 2377 (the fourth line of the first stanza of this Ballad). To these first two stanzas were added a further seven on the theme of chastity.
4. f. 3a. Following item 3 without a break is a single 7-line stanza on the pleasure of serving a considerate master, beg. "A how hit ys an hertly reioysing". This is not printed by Stow, and obviously does not belong with the preceding nine stanzas: a cross in the margin, in a different ink from that used by the scribe, is perhaps meant to indicate that the stanza does not belong here.
5. f. 3b. A Lover's Complaint, 5 stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "[0] ye all that ben or haue byn in dys^sease". Not in Brown & Robbins. Printed by Kenneth G. Wilson, op. cit. pp. 404-5.

6. ff. 3b-4a. Another Complaint, three and a half 8-line stanzas beg. "[A]ll lust and lykyng I begyn to lede" (corrected to leue above the line). Not in Brown & Robbins. Printed by Kenneth G. Wilson, op. cit. pp. 405-406 where the correct stanza division, obscured in the MS, is restored.
7. ff. 4a-6b. Thirty-two stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "[O] lady myne to whom thys boke I sende". Not in Brown & Robbins. Printed by Kenneth G. Wilson, op. cit. pp. 407-415.
8. ff. 7a-8b and 154a. A love poem beg. "[G]o lytyl boke for dredefull ys thy message". Not in Brown & Robbins. This poem has apparently not been printed, and I have been unable to trace any other copy.ⁱ

i. Items 2 to 8 have sometimes been referred to as extracts from Lydgate's Fall of Princes (see Carleton Brown, Register of Middle English Religious Verse, ~~Bibliographical Society~~, Oxford 1916, Vol. I, pp. 239-240; C. Brown and R.H. Robbins, Index of Middle English Verse, New York 1943, no. 1168; G.S. Ivy, The Make-Up of Middle English Verse Manuscripts, University of London doctoral dissertation (1953), pp. 259-260). Apart from the two stanzas adapted to form the beginning of Item 3 their attribution to Lydgate and The Fall of Princes seems to be quite unfounded.

9. ff. 9a-11b. Lydgate's Churl and the Bird, Brown & Robbins no. 2784.
10. ff. 12a-16a. Lydgate's Isopes Fabules, Brown & Robbins no. 4178. Four of the fables are copied here by the original scribe, and ~~two~~ more were added later by John Stow on folios 236a-237a (see Item 49 below). Fable IV lacks 29 stanzas and fable VI, The Sun's Marriage, (12 stanzas) is omitted altogether.
11. ff. 17a-25a. Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls, Brown & Robbins no. 3412.
12. f. 25a. Following on from the previous item with the heading Verba translatoris is one stanza in rhyme royal in praise of Chaucer, beg. "Master Geffray Chauusers that now lyth in graue". Brown & Robbins no. 2128.
13. ff. 26a-40b. The tale of Guiscardo and Ghismonda (by William Walter?), Brown & Robbins no. 3258.
14. ff. 41a-45b. The Complaint of a Prisoner, by George Ashby, 1463. Brown & Robbins no. 437.
15. ff. 49a-52a. An extract from Lydgate and Burgh's Secrees of Old Philisoffres, 26 stanzas beg. at line 1296 (stanza 186) "What tyme the sesoun of the yeer". Brown & Robbins no. 935.
16. ff. 52b-53a. Of the Four Complexions, Brown & Robbins no. 1614. (This is not another extract from Lydgate and Burgh's Secrees of Old Philisoffres as Dr. Ivy says - op. cit. p. 262.)
17. ff. 55a-65b. The Assembly of Ladies, Brown & Robbins no. ~~1502~~ 1528.

18. f.67a. Two 7-line stanzas beg. "The vnware woo that commeth on gladnesse", Brown & Robbins no. 3493 (where these two stanzas are classed as a separate item, with this MS quoted as the only place where they are to be found). The stanzas belong to the poem on ff. 171-202b (see f. 179a) details of which are given under Item 38 below. The word vacat is written in the margin on either side of these stanzas on f. 67a, indicating that they are to be cancelled.
 19. f. 67b. "Here foloweth the Interpretacion of the names of goddys and goddesses as ys rehersyd in þe tretyse folowyng as poetes wryte." Beg. "Phebus ys as moche to sey as þe Sonne".
ff. 68a-97b. The Assembly of Gods, perhaps by Lydgate, Brown & Robbins no. 4005.
 20. ff. 98a-108b. Sir Richard Ros's La Belle Dame sans Mercy, Brown & Robbins no. 1086.
 21. ff. 109a-110a. The X Commaundments of Love, Brown & Robbins no. 590.
 22. ff. 110b-111a. The IX Ladyes Worthy, Brown & Robbins no. 2767.
 23. ff. 114a-150b. Chaucer's Legend of Good Women, Brown & Robbins no. 100.
 24. ff. 151a-152b. Chaucer's Complaint unto Pity, Brown & Robbins no. 2756.
- f. 154a. The remainder of the lines beginning on f. 7a, "[G]o lytyl boke for dredefull ys thy message". See Item 8.

25. f. 154a. A lover's lament, one 7-line stanza beg. "My lefe ys faren in a lond", Brown & Robbins no. 2254.
26. ff. 154b-156a. The Craft of Lovers, a dialogue between Cupido and Diana: 26 stanzas in rhyme royal, of which this MS has 23. Brown & Robbins no. 3761. Stanza 19 of this poem also occurs as part of Item 34 below.
27. f. 156b. A balade on hypocritical women, Brown & Robbins no. 2661.
28. ff. 157a-b. A balade beg. "Now fresshe floure to me that ys so bryght", ending with "Lothe to offende" in place of the usual Explicit. Brown & Robbins no. 2311. Printed by R.H. Robbins in Secular Lyrics of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, 2nd. ed. Oxford 1955, pp. 139-141.
29. ff. 157b-159a. Lydgate's Bycorne and Chychevache, Brown & Robbins no. 2541.
30. f. 159b. A love poem beg. "Honour and Ioy helthe and prosperyte", Brown & Robbins no. 1238. Printed by R.H. Robbins in Secular Lyrics, pp. 192-193.
31. f. 160a. The Lover's Lament, a virelai of 5 stanzas, Brown & Robbins no. 267.
32. f. 160a. Seven stanzas in rhyme royal, beg. "In the season of Feuere when hit was full colde", Brown & Robbins no. 1562.
33. f. 160b. Ten stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "Lady of pite for py sorowes pat pu haddest", Brown & Robbins no. 1838.

Printed by Kenneth G. Wilson in "Five Unpublished Secular Love Poems from MS Trinity College Cambridge 599",

Anglia LXXII, ~~Tubingen~~ (1954) pp. 415-418.

34. ff. 161a-b. Thirteen stanzas beg. "O merciful and O mercyable", Brown & Robbins no. 2510, where details are given of the way in which this is made up from the scraps of other poems (including Item 26 above, of which stanza 19 is the tenth stanza given here).
35. f. 161b. Four stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "Son of Priamus gentyll parys of troy", Brown & Robbins no. 3197.
36. ff. 162a-169a. Parts 2, 3 and 4 of Lydgate's Testament in 5 sections, beg. "The yeres past of my tendyr youthe", Brown & Robbins no. 2464.
37. f. 170b. Prohemium to an extract from Lydgate's Fall of Princes, Brown & Robbins no. 4231. Not printed.
38. ff. 171a-202a. A combination of extracts from Lydgate's Fall of Princes and Chaucer's Monk's Tale, giving the stories of Adam, Samson and Dido, beg. "When Iohn Bochas consyderyd had and sought". Brown & Robbins no. 3983.ⁱ

i. For more detailed discussion see E.P. Hammond, "Two British Museum MSS" in Anglia XXVIII, (1905) pp. 19-20, 23, where this set of extracts from The Fall of Princes is compared with that in Harley 2251; H.N. MacCracken, "A new MS of Chaucer's Monkes Tale", in Modern Language Notes XXIII, (1908) p. 93; and J.M. Manly & E. Rickert, op. cit. Vol. 1, pp. 533-534.

39. ff. 205a-b. The descryvyng of a fayre lady, 7 stanzas on the marriage of Joan of Navarre to Henry IV in 1403. Brown & Robbins no. 1300.

40. ff. 205b-206a. Four stanzas beg.

a) "O mosy Quince hangyng by your stalke", Brown & Robbins no. 2524.

b) "Wyne women worshyp vnweldy age", Brown & Robbins no. 4230.

c) "Your vgly chere dey^uous and froward"

d) "My lovely lewde masterasse take consideracion"

This seems to be a balade including as its second stanza one which is also found alone, or in combination with stanzas other than these.ⁱ

i. See above, p. 10 note i, and also Curt F. Bühler, "Lydgate's Horse, Sheep and Goose and Huntington MS H M 144" in Modern Language Notes, LV, (1940) p. 569, note 11. Stow prints the first third and fourth stanzas in his 1561 Chaucer, but omits the second.

41. ff. 206a-207a. Lydgate's Dyte of Womenhis Hornys, beg.

"Of god and kynde procedeth all Beawte", Brown & Robbins no. 2625.

42. ff. 207a-b. Six stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "Looke well about ye that louers be", Brown & Robbins no. 1944.

43. ff. 208a-b. A Pilgrims' Song, beg. "Men may leue all gamys", Brown & Robbins no. 2148.
44. f. 208b. A single quatrain beg. "He that wyll in Eschepe ete a goose so fat", printed by M.R. James, op. cit., p. 73. Some regard this stanza as part of the preceding poem, but I agree with Dr. Ivy (op. cit., pp. 263-4) that ti should stand alone. F.J. Furnivall in his edition of Item 43 (The Stacions of Rome, Pilgrims Sea-Voyage and Clene Maydenhod, EETS XXV, London 1867, pp. 37-40) omits this stanza.
45. ff. 209a-b. Lydgate's They that no while endure, eight 7-line stanzas beg. "A knyght that ys as hardy as a lyoun", Brown & Robbins no. 55.
46. ff. 209b-211a. 108 lines beg. "The wyseman sayd vnto hys sonne", Brown & Robbins no. 3502.
47. ff. 211a-213a. How the good wyfe taught hyr doughtere, Brown & Robbins no. 671.
48. ff. 218a-235a. The Courte of Love, 1442 lines in rhyme royal stanzas beg. "With tymeros hert and tremlyng hand of drede", Brown & Robbins no. 4205.
49. ff. 236a-237a. Numbers 5 and 7 of Lydgate's Isopes Fabules, Brown & Robbins no. 4178. (See above, Item 10.)
50. ff. 241a-245b. A poem by Piers of Fulham beg. "A man that lovith Fisshyng and fowlyng bothe", Brown & Robbins no. 71.
51. ff. 248a-252a. The Petigrew of England, in prose.

On the recto of the second flyleaf, in a late sixteenth or seventeenth century hand, is a table of contents which reads as follows:

This Volume contains

Lidgates Poems.

The Parliament of Birds by Chaucer.

A Poem by Geo: Ashley Prisoner in the Fleet A:D: 1463.

Assemble de Dayms by Chaucer.

La Belle dame saunt Mercie. By Chaucer.

The 10 Commandments of Love by Chaucer.

The 9 Ladys Worthy by Chaucer.

The legend of Ladies by Chaucer.

The Explanation of the Death of Pyte by Chaucer.

The Craft of Lovers by Chaucer.

The court of Love by Chaucer

& several othe little Pieces of Chaucers.

Piers of Fulhams Love Poems

The Genealogy of the Kings of England from the Normans

Condition:

There are a surprisingly large number of stubs visible in this manuscript - either where a leaf has been cancelled; a single leaf added to a gathering in order to finish the work in hand; blank leaves cut out to be used for some other purpose; or, as Manly and Rickert suggest (op. cit. p. 534), where they have been

lost (for example, between ff. 169 and 170) they may have been originally unprotected. It is comparatively easy to account for the six single stubs in one or other of these ways, but much more difficult to find an explanation for the groups of 4 stubs, apparently stitched at the centre as can be seen at ff. 97-98, which occur with some regularity after the third, sixth, ninth, twelfth, sixteenth, twentieth, twenty-third, twenty-sixth and thirtieth gatherings. It may well be that this is some device used by the binder.

The manuscript contains a large number of blank leaves - 21 completely blank together with 10 versos and 1 recto blank, a feature which Manly and Rickert believe connects the MS with MS Harley 2251ⁱ. It was perhaps intended to fill these blank leaves later with short lyrical poems.

i. J.M. Manly and E. Rickert, op. cit. ~~vol.~~ p. 534.

Layout of Page:

There are 4 to 6 stanzas to a page (or where double columns are used, as they occasionally are, 8 to 12 stanzas). On folios 98a-108b which contain La Belle Dame sans Mercy there are five stanzas to the page. In non-stanzaic verse there are between 34 and 40 lines to the page, and in the prose item on folios 248-252a there are 48 lines to the page.

Running titles are not given, although the title is sometimes

stated briefly, either in a rubric at the head of the work or in a colophon. The name of the author is given only once by the original scribe, although about half the poems have been assigned by later hands to one or other of the major poets known to the fifteenth century, and most often to Chaucer. The author named by the scribe is Piers of Fulham, who is accredited with the poem beginning on folio 241a, and is described as having been an "Vssher of Venus scole".

No evidence of pricking remains, and this was very probably trimmed away, along with the majority of the signatures,

Margins were originally ruled in brown crayon, which is now very much faded. The area of the frame lines varies somewhat, as would be expected in a manuscript written sometimes in single and sometimes in double columns. On folios 98a-108b, containing La Belle Dame sans Mercy, the area enclosed by the frame lines is 11.2 by 19.1 cms.

The open 'a' sign is sometimes used at the beginnings of stanzas, although it is not strictly necessary as a distinguishing mark. Stanzas are often bracketed together with lines drawn in red ink, and proper names occurring in the poems are also sometimes underlined in red. As in many manuscripts, spaces and guide letters were left for the insertion of coloured capitals, but none were inserted.

Handwriting:

Folios 1-45b, 55a-213a and 241a-245b, the majority of the MS

in fact, are written in a neat, late fifteenth century vernacular (Bastard) script, by two scribes whose work is very difficult to distinguish. Scholars who have described the manuscript disagree when they try to distinguish between the two hands in this section. The main hand is also found in MS Trinity College, Cambridge R. 3. 21 and in parts of MS British Museum Add. 34360 and MS Harley 2251ⁱ.

i. See G.S. Ivy, op. cit., p. 265 and E.P. Hammond, "Two British Museum MSS" in Anglia XXVIII, (1905) p. 27.

Folios 49a-53a are written in what looks like an untidy sixteenth century hand, quite different from the script of the majority of the MS, although Sir Walter Greg believed this section to be written by the same scribe in a more current styleⁱⁱ.

ii. W.W. Greg, "Chaucer Attributions in MS R.3. 19 in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge" in Modern Language Review Vol. VIII, (1913) pp. 539-540.

This is certainly possible, though it is perhaps not very probable, that a professional scribe should suddenly choose to spoil the neatness and uniformity of his work by relapsing into an untidy, current hand. However this may be, it is certain that two items at the end of the MS were written by a different scribe, in a more angular hand than that of the majority of the MS, probably in the

late fifteenth century¹. These are The Court of Love (ff. 218a-235a) and The Petrigrew of England (ff. 248a-252a). The remaining folios, 236a-237a, were written and signed by John Stow (see Item 49 in the list of Contents).

i. W.W. Skeat (Chaucer's Works Vol. VII, Oxford 1897, p. lxxiv note2), W.A. Neilson (^{Boston 1899, Harvard University Modern Languages Department} The Origins and Sources of the "Court of Love") ⁱⁿ Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, ~~Harvard University Modern Languages Department, Boston 1899,~~ Vol. VI, p. 1) and A. Brusendorff (The Chaucer Tradition, London and Copenhagen 1925, p. 182 note 1) date the handwriting as sixteenth century, but their dating may be influenced by the fact that they all believe The Court of Love to have been written in the sixteenth century, Skeat after 1532 and Neilson in the first quarter of the century. Greg's argument (op. cit. pp. 539-40), that as the folios of this section are numbered by the same fifteenth century hand as the rest of the manuscript they were probably written at a not much later date, seems to me reasonable.

The hand of La Belle Dame sans Mercy (ff. 98a-108b) shows some variety of letter forms, there are both the small modern and the tall looped letter a; the ascenders of b, d, h, and l are all looped; e is small and modern in form; g is written like Y with a bar across the top; both the modern and the 2- or z-shaped forms of r are used; the sigma form and long s are both used; the first stroke of v and w is usually longer than the rest,

Correction:

There is very little correction in this manuscript. Stow supplies an alternative version of a line in a portion of the MS which he has himself copied. Manly and Rickert (op. cit. Vol. 533) give an instance of a mistake in stanza division which is allowed to pass uncorrected.

Other Marginalia:

These fall into three main categories; the addition of the name of the author or the title of a poem, private notes concerning the contents of various stanzas - quite often in Stow's handwriting- and the interesting series of numerals in dry-point on folios 67b-97b. This last suggests that (like Longleat 258) the manuscript was at one time used by a printer, at least for Item 19, The Assembly of Gods, which is copied on these folios. The first number clearly to be seen is 4 beside Bacchus, the twenty-fifth name in the list of gods and goddesses on f. 67b. After this, most of the numbers up to 16 can be seen at 24-line intervals; then comes the letter b and numbers up to 16, c-16, d-16, e-16 and f as far as 10, and possibly 11 at the end of folio 97b. It would be interesting to compare early printed versions of this poem with the manuscript.

According to Skeatⁱ Stow printed several poems from this MS in his 1561 edition of Chaucer.

i. W.W. Skeat, Chaucer's Works Vol. VII, Oxford 1897, p. lxxii.

The names of authors and titles of poems are added in what seem to be several different sixteenth century hands, sometimes in bold but neat and careful lettering, and occasionally in a broad, sprawling hand. Greg believesⁱ that many of these were written by one man, whom he names, in a variety of different styles, and also that Stow is responsible for the sprawling headings which, although they are so different in general appearance from his usually rather small, neat writing, nevertheless show some similarity of letter forms.

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- i. W.W. Greg, 'Chaucer Attributions in MS R. 3. 19 in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge', in Modern Language Review, Vol. VIII, ~~Cambridge~~ (1913) pp. 539-540.
-

On folios 157b-159a Stow has added notes of the pictures which should accompany Lydgate's Bycorne and Chychevache. These are substantially the same as the notes in MS Harley 2251, only terser.

A drawing of a hand, pointing to some stanza particularly to be noted, occurs several times, as well as the more usual abbreviation of 'Nota', and on f. 212b, opposite the lines

With ryche Roobys and garlondes & with ryche thyng

Counterfete no lady as thy hosbond were a kyng

from How the Good Wife taught her Daughter, is the emphatic nota et iterum nota.

On folio 247b, in dry point, is the name 'thom rych', which Manly and Rickert (op. cit. pp. 534) identify tentatively as Thomas Ryche, a wealthy London citizen who died about 1474 (although they date the version of the Monk's Tale, and therefore the manuscript, at after 1478ⁱ). Folio 247b also seems to contain a signature, but it is difficult to decipher.

i. J.M. Manly and E. Rickert, op. cit. pp. 533 and 534.

History:

Several factors suggest that MS Trinity College, Cambridge R. 3. 19 was made in a commercial scriptorium. The number of separate booklets, each foliated with a new set of numbers, the frequent blank leaves and the general plainness of the work all indicate this. After comparing contents, script and some Shirley spellings, Miss Hammond writes

"From these agreements [in content], and from the identity of hand in parts of Add. 34360, Harley 2251, and R. 3, 19 also the agreement in hand between the rest of R. 3, 19 and R. 3, 21, I argue that these MSS were executed at a closely contemporary date, and possibly in a scriptorium where two Shirley MSS at least, and other non-Shirley MSS were simultaneously before the copyists." ii

ii. E.P. Hammond, 'Two British Museum Manuscripts' in Anglia

XXVIII. (1905) pp. 23 and 27. 1485 for this version of

It is evident that at some time during the second half of the sixteenth century the manuscript was in the possession of John Stow, and from him it passed into the possession of the Willmer family, until it was given by George Willmer (d. 1626)ⁱ to the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

- i. M.R. James, op. cit. p. 289, in his description of Trinity R. 14. 7 (Catalogue no. 883), which was also given by Willmer, quotes a letter in the front of the MS from C.H. Cooper to the Revd. John Glover, Cambridge 5 Oct. 1860: "It may interest you to know that I have succeeded in tracing some few particulars respecting George Willmer. He was in the high commission a justice of the peace for Middlesex, and dying 1626 was buried at Westham in Essex." On pp. xix-xx James gives a list of the 39 ^{books} given to the library by Willmer.

See also E. Seaton, Sir Richard Roos, Lancastrian Poet, London 1961, pp. 94-5.

Date:

The MS is certainly later than the year 1463, when George Ashby's Complaint of a Prisoner was written. Manly and Rickert (op. cit. p. 533) date the version of the Monk's Tale (Item 38) after 1478, because they believe the text to be copied from the Caxton print of about that date, rather than from the manuscript

used by Caxton. Wright¹ suggests 1485 for this version of Guiscardo and Ghismonda (Item 13), but his evidence for this dating is not very strong.

The very full description of this small paper manuscript given by R.H. Robbings under the title 'The Firdausi Anthology' London i. H.G. Wright ed., Tales from the Decameron, EETS CCV, 1937, in PRMA LXXX (1954), pp. 519-542, is so exhaustive that any description given here would only be an unnecessary and less

Reference has already been made to the controversy over the dating of The Court of Love (see above, p. 72 note i); further discussion of the matter is beyond the scope of this thesis.

From such indications of the probable dates of various poems in the manuscript, and from the evidence of script and watermarks, it seems likely that the manuscript was written sometime during the last two decades of the fifteenth century.

The lack of formal headings in this manuscript has led to some confusion in the past, particularly in regard to the shorter lyrics, where totally unrelated stories often follow on without a break. The list given by Professor Robbings² comprises 62 items, some of which are not listed in the Index³. The difference in numbering between my list and that of Professor Robbings occurs because he lists the sacred extract from Savat's Confessio Amantis as two separate items (IF 1114-1214 and IF 1215-1406) where I have regarded it as one.

1. R.H. Robbings, op. cit. pp. 512-515.

2. G. Brown and R.H. Robbings, op. cit.

C Cambridge University Ff. 1. 6. Cambridge Univ. Library

The very full description of this small paper manuscript given by R.H. Robbins under the title 'The Findern Anthology' in PMLA LXIX (1954), pp. 610-642, is so exhaustive that any description given here would only be an unnecessary and less satisfactory account of similar conclusions. I shall therefore give only a list of contents, since it is of interest to know in what context La Belle Dame sans Mercy was to be found in mediaeval anthologies, and such bibliographical details as may be strictly relevant to a study of the text of La Belle Dame sans Mercy.

Contents:

The lack of formal headings in this manuscript has led to some confusion in the past, particularly in regard to the shorter lyrics, where totally unrelated stanzas often follow on without a break. The list given by Professor Robbinsⁱ comprises 62 items, some of which are not listed in the Indexⁱⁱ. The difference in numbering between my list and that of Professor Robbins occurs because he lists the second extract from Gower's Confessio Amantis as two separate items (IV 1114-1244 and IV 1245-1466) where I have regarded it as one.

i. R.H. Robbins, op. cit. pp. 612-618.

ii. C. Brown and R.H. Robbins, op. cit.

In some cases I am indebted to him for items which I had not previously realised to be separate poems. First lines are quoted and the number of stanzas given where texts are not well-known and readily accessible.

1. ff. 3a-4b. The end of the story of Tereus, from Gower's Confessio Amantis, V. 5921-6052. Brown & Robbins no. 2662.ⁱ

- i. C. Brown and R.H. Robbins, op. cit.

2. ff. 5a-10b. The story of Rosiphelee, daughter of King Herupus, from Gower's Confessio Amantis, IV. 1114-1466. Brown & Robbins no. 2662.
3. ff. 15a-17a. Chaucer's Complaint unto Pity, Brown & Robbins no. 2756.
4. ff. 17a-18b. A Lover's Plaint, thirteen 8-line stanzas beg. "[A]s ofte as syghes ben in herte trewe". Brown & Robbins no. 402.
5. ff. 19a-b. Seven 8-line stanzas and envoy 'To his Mistress' beg. "[F]or lac of sight grete cause I haue to pleyne". Brown & Robbins no. 828.
6. f. 20a. A Lover's Plaint, three 7-line stanzas beg. "I may well sygh for greuous ys my payne". Brown & Robbins no. 1331. Printed by R.H. Robbins, Secular Lyrics of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, 2nd ed. Oxford 1955, p. 158.
7. f. 20b. Two stanzas in rhyme royal 'To his Mistress' beg.

12. "Where y haue chosyn stedefast woll y be". Brown & Robbins no. 4059. Printed by R.H. Robbins, PMLA LXIX p. 632.
8. f.20b. Four lines beg. "Ye are to blame to sette yowre hert so sore" (surely not addressed to the poet's mistress as indicated in Robbins p. 613). Printed by Robbins, p. 632.
9. ff. 22a-28a. The Cuckoo and the Nightingale, perhaps by Clanvoweⁱ. Brown & Robbins no. 3361.
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- i. See above, p. 7 note ii.
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10. f. 28b. Two stanzas of rhyme royal, To his Mistress, beg. "As in yow resstythmy Ioy and comfort". Brown & Robbins no. 383. Printed by Robbins, Secular Lyrics P. 155.
11. ff. 29a-42b. Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls. Brown & Robbins no. 3412. (A few lines of the ~~page~~^{text} are missing where p. 42 is torn.)
12. ff. 45a-51a. The story of the Three Questions from Gower's Confessio Amantis, I. 3067-3425. Brown & Robbins no. 2662.
13. ff. 51a-52a. The Parliament of Love, 87 lines in couplets with the couplet heading "What so euyr I syng or sey/ My wyll is good too preyse here well", beg. "Now zee that wull of loue here" and concluding with an envoy of three stanzas in rhyme royal. Brown & Robbins no. 2383.
14. f. 53b. Roundel on Fortune beg. "When fortune list yewe here assent". Brown & Robbins no. 3948.

15. f. 53b. Proverb, five lines beg. "Peece maketh plente".
Brown & Robbins no. 2742.
16. f. 56a. Feigned Love, four 8-line stanzas beg. "What
so men seyn". Brown & Robbins no. 3917. Printed by
Robbins, PMLA LXIX pp. 632-3.
17. ff. 56b-58b. Licence to Live at Ease, eleven 12-line
stanzas beg. "As I walkyd apon a day". Brown & Robbins
no. 373.
18. f. 59a. Chaucer's Complaint to his Purse. Brown &
Robbins no. 3787.
19. ff. 61a-63b. Anelida's Complaint from Chaucer's Anelida
and Arcite. Brown & Robbins no. 3670.
20. ff. 64a-67b. The story of Thisbe from Chaucer's Legend
of Good Women. Brown & Robbins no. 100.
21. ff. 68a-69b. Chaucer's Complaint of Venus. Brown &
Robbins no. 3542.
22. f. 69b. A Love Song, seven 3-line stanzas beg. "My
woofull hert this clad in payn". Brown & Robbins no. 2279.
Printed by Robbins, PMLA LXIX pp. 633-634.
23. ff. 71a-76b. Hoccleve's Letter of Cupid beg. "Cupido
vnto whos commandement". Incomplete: 48 of 68 stanzas
in rhyme royal in the order 1-19, 30-39, 50-59, 20-28.
Brown & Robbins no. 666.
24. ff. 81a-84a. 'Somnolence' from Gower's Confessio Amantis
IV. 2745-2926. Brown & Robbins no. 2662.
25. ff. 84b-95a. The beginning of the story of Apollonius of

- Tyre, including the tale of King Antiochus and his daughter, from Gower's Confessio Amantis VIII. 271-846. Brown & Robbins no. 2662. *The Distressed Lover*, six quatrains beg.
26. ff. 96a-109b. Sir Degrevaunt, 1904 lines in 16-line stanzas beg. "Lord gode in trynite". Brown & Robbins no. 1953. *The Vicissitudes of Love*, three stanzas in
27. ff. 110a-113a. Prose: 'The cronekelys of seyntes & kinges of yngelonde' beg. "Brute com after pe makyng / of pe world in to pys londe / of Albyon nowe yngland".
28. ff. 113a-b. Prose: Arms of the Kings of Europe beg. "The emperour of Allmyen / He Beryth goold an Egyll with ii heedes".
29. ff. 117a-134b. Sir Richard Ros's La Belle Dame sans Mercy. Brown & Robbins no. 1086. *Valiant Fortune*, three stanzas
30. ff. 135a-136a. A love cycle, 51 lines in four groups, each of three stanzas of 5, 3 and 5 lines, beg. "Welcome be ye my souereine". Brown & Robbins no. 3878. Printed by Robbins, PMLA LXIX pp. 634-635.
31. ff. 136b-137a. A Slighted Lover's Complaint, nine quatrains and burden, beg. "Some tyme y loued as ye may see" with the refrain "Who so lyst to loue god send hym right good spede". Brown & Robbins no. 3179.
32. f. 137a. One quatrain beg. "Sith fortune hath me set thus in this wyse". Brown & Robbins no. 3125. Printed by Robbins, PMLA LXIX p. 635.
33. f. 137b. 'A Pledge of Loyalty to his Mistress'; six stanzas

- beg. "Now wold I fayne sum myrthis make". Brown & Robbins no. 2381. "Most glorious queen Reynyng yn heven". Brown
34. ff. 137b-138a. 'The Distressed Lover', six quatrains beg. "Alas alas and Alas Why". Brown & Robbins no. 139. Printed by Robbins, Secular Lyrics pp. 156-7.
35. f. 138b. 'The Vicissitudes of Love', three stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "Alas what planet was y born vndir". Brown & Robbins no. 159. Printed by Robbins, PMLA LXIX pp. 635-6.
36. ff. 138b-139a. 'The Lover's Plaint', three 6-line stanzas beg. "Continvaunce/ Of remembraunce/ Withowte endyng". Brown & Robbins no. 657. Printed by Robbins PMLA LXIX p. 636.
37. f. 139a. 'A Complaint against Fortune', three stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "My self walkyng all Allone". Brown & Robbins no. 2269.
38. f. 139b. 'The Delivered Lover', eight quatrains and burden beg. "Som tyme y lould so do y yut". Brown & Robbins no. 3180.
39. ff. 143b-144a. A love song, ten 6-line stanzas beg. "For to preuente/ And after repente/ hyt wer Foly". Brown & Robbins no. 853. Printed by Robbins PMLA LXIX pp. 636-638.
40. ff. 144b-145a. A moral lament, six stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "In Full grett hevenesse myn hert ys pwyght". Brown & Robbins no. 1489.

41. f. 146a. A prayer to the Virgin, three stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "Most glorius quene Reynyng yn hevene". Brown & Robbins no. 2202.
42. f. 146b. A prayer to Christ for protection, three stanzas in rhyme royal, beg. "O Cryste Ihū mekely I pray to the". Brown & Robbins no. 2401.
43. ff. 147a-150a. Lydgate's Wicked Tongue, nineteen stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "Considre Wel wiht euery circumstance". Brown & Robbins no. 653.
44. ff. 150a-151a. A composite poem on the Tongue, seven stanzas in rhyme royal incorporating three stanzas from Lydgate's Fall of Princes (I. 4621-41) and three stanzas from Chaucer's Troilus and Cressida (III. 302-322), beg. "Ther is no more dredfull pestelens". Brown & Robbins no. 3535.
45. f. 151a. One stanza beg. "The more I go the further I am behynde" from 'Tyed with a Line', of which it is the first stanza. Brown & Robbins no. 3437.ⁱ
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- i. See above, p. 10 Item 27 (d).
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46. ff. 151a-152a. 'Seven Wise Counsels to a Prince', seven stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "By sapience tempre thy courage". Brown & Robbins no. 576.
47. ff. 152b-153a. Lydgate's Complaint for lack of mercy, four 8-line stanzas beg. "Grettere matter of dol an heynesse".

- Brown & Robbins no. 1017.
48. f. 153a. One stanza in rhyme royal on 'The Cruelties of his Mistress', beg. "This ys no lyf alas þt y do lede".
Brown & Robbins no. 3613.
49. ff. 153a-b. 'A Complaint against his Mistress', two stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "My woofull herte plunged yn heuynesse", listed by Brown & Robbins with Item 48 above under no. 3613. In his description of the manuscript (PMLA LXIX p. 617) Robbins lists them separately, however, and I agree with this division. Printed by Robbins, PMLA LXIX p. 638.
50. f. 153b. 'The Faithful Lover', one 8-line stanza beg, "Euer yn one with my dewattendaunce". Brown & Robbins no. 734. Printed by Robbins, Secular Lyrics p. 156.
51. ff. 153b-154a. 'A Petition to his Mistress', three stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "Yit wulde I nat the causer faryd a mysse". Printed by Robbins, PMLA LXIX pp. 638-9.
52. f. 154a. A Balade, three 6-line stanzas beg. "Veryly/ And truly/ I schall nat fayne". Brown & Robbins no. 3849. Printed by Robbins, PMLA LXIX p. 639.
53. f. 154b. Two stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "As in my remembrauns non but ye a lone". Brown & Robbins no. 380. Printed by Robbins, Secular Lyrics pp. 157-8.
54. ff. 155a-156a. Part of a poem 'Against the Pain and Sorrow of Evil Marriage', beg. "Take hede and lern lytull chyld and see". Brown & Robbins no. 919.

55. ff. 156b-159b. 'How myschaunce regnyth in Ingeland', nineteen 8-line stanzas beg. "Now god þat syttyst an hygh in trone". Brown & Robbins no. 2317.
56. ff. 159b-161b. 'A Compleint vnto dame fortune', incomplete, thirteen stanzas in rhyme royal and one quatrain beg. "O þou fortune why art þou so inconstaunt". Brown & Robbins no. 2568. Printed by Robbins, PMLA LXIX pp. 639-642.
57. f. 162b. A poem on 'The Four Complexions', four stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "Off yifftis large in loue hathe gret delite". Brown & Robbins no. 2624.
58. f. 164a. A Tretise for Lauandres, perhaps by Lydgate, three stanzas in rhyme royal beg. "Yee maisteresses myne and clenly chamberys". Brown & Robbins no. 4254.
59. ff. 166a-177b. Seventy-one 8-line stanzas corresponding to ll. 1604-1977 of the French text of Voeux de Paon beg. "Cassamus roos aftre this talkynge". Brown & Robbins no. *22.
60. f. 178a. A 'Complaint against Fortune', three stanzas in rhyme royal with a 2-line refrain beg. "A mercy fortune haue pitee on me". Brown & Robbins no. 12. Ascribed by H.N. MacCrackenⁱ to the Earl of Suffolk, and by E. Seatonⁱⁱ to Sir Richard Ros.

i. H.N. MacCracken, 'An English Friend of Charles of Orleans' in PMLA XXVI (1911), pp. 142-180. On p. 180 MacCracken prints the poem, and says that it is probably by Suffolk.

ii. Ethel Seaton, op. cit. pp. 203-4.

61. ff. 181a-185b. Benedist Burgh's version of Cato Major, in rhyme royal, 40 stanzas, disarranged and beginning with stanza 32: "Chaunge not thi Freende that thou knowest of oolde". Brown & Robbins no. 854. Part of folio 185 is torn away, and some stanzas are therefore incomplete.

Bibliographical Notes on the section of the manuscript containing La Belle Dame sans Mercy (ff. 117a-134b):

Size:

Rather irregular because the pages are often worn away at the edge; approximately 21.6 by 15.0 cms.

Pagination:

The pages have twice been numbered in pencil in a modern hand, once before the book was rebound and again after rebinding when blank pages were inserted where the missing leaves had once stood.

There is no trace of old pagination of any kind in this section of the manuscript.

Collation:

Folios 116-136 are made up in three gatherings of 4, 10 and 8, with two leaves now missing, one before f. 116 and one after f. 136.

Catchwords:

None. part of the manuscript is written in an early, late fifteenth century hand. The letter 'a' is small and modern in

Signatures:

loops of b, d, h and l are rounded; the a is of the type None. with two loops and facing towards the left; g looks like x with a line across the top; the r is long and curved;

Condition:

Folios 117, 118 and 119 have had to be repaired; the other leaves in this section are in fairly good condition except at the corners. The leaves are rather dirty and discoloured.

Corrections:Layout of Page:

There are three stanzas to a page. Folio 117a is headed Prologue by the original scribe; there is no colophon and no running title.

There is no pricking, and while there may originally have been ruling in dry-point, it is now very difficult to find traces of this. On some folios faint frame lines enclosing an area of approximately 9.6 by 15.3 cms. can just be seen.

Alternate stanzas are attributed to Lamant and La dame respectively; a rough, uneven ink line was drawn between ll. 8288 and 829 on folio 134a and Explicit written in the margin, thus separating the envoy from the rest of the poem.

Folios 121a, 122a, 127a and 128b have been cancelled by a large cross, but it is difficult to see why this was done.

the occasion."

Handwriting:

This part of the manuscript is written in an untidy, late fifteenth century hand. The letter a is small and modern in form; the loops of b, d, h and l are rounded; the e is of the type made with two loops and facing towards the left; g looks like y with a line across the top; the r is long and forked; both sigma s and long s are used; u and v sometimes resemble a modern b, and w often looks like double b, but sometimes resembles the modern form.

Correction:

There are several alterations and crossings out in the hand of the scribe. At one point on folio 127a the scribe at first wrote La dame, but underlined it and wrote the correct Lamant beneath.

Other Marginalia:

At the top of folio 118a is written the name "Anne Schyrley" in the same hand as that of the poem. The names of four other women occur in other parts of the manuscript, and R.H. Robbins, PMLA LXIX p. 627, identifies these as the names of families living in the Findern district in Derbyshire. Robbins suggests (p. 628) that possibly these young women of neighbouring families "when visiting Findern, copied into the big book texts of poems which they enjoyed, from MSS of their own or MSS borrowed for the occasion."

There are a number of small crosses, apparently made when the scribe was looking through his work, and indicating some error or omission. On folio 117b there is a cross in either margin where line 35 was originally omitted and later written in by the same hand. On f. 119a there is a small cross in the margin opposite l. 101, on f. 129a there is a small cross in the left hand margin opposite line 581, and on folio 132b two small crosses on either side of the stanza where l. 753 was originally omitted and afterwards written in by the same hand.

Date:

The manuscript as a whole covers a period of many years, but this section, judging by the hand, appears to belong to the latter part of the fifteenth century. Since it seems probable that the manuscript was bound blank and used as a commonplace book, with items added over a long period, the approximate date of the paper would be of no help in dating this copy of La Belle Dame sans Mercy.

1. G.M. Briquet, *op. cit.*

11. G.M. Briquet, *op. cit.* vol. III, p. 313.

S. 1221

Sloane 1710

British Museum

Previous Descriptions:

1. Samuel Ayscough, A Catalogue of the Sloane, Birch and Additional Manuscripts in the British Museum, London 1872, Part I, pp. 93-94. Ayscough gives a list of contents, of which La Belle Dame sans Mercy is Item 50.
2. Ethel Seaton, Sir Richard Roos, Lancastrian Poet, London 1961, p. 95.

Material:

Paper.

Watermarks:

A unicorn, something like Briquetⁱ no. 10026 (1477), but not the same. Of this type Briquet writes: "Le groupe 10013 à 10050 pourrait appartenir à un seul battoir, car de plus ancien n° (10013 de 1443) au plus jeune (10050 de 1568), et malgré des défaillances fréquentes, le dessin de la licorne varie peu; toutefois le nombre considérable des figures recueillies et leur dissémination autorisent à penser que plusieurs établissements ont employé ce filigr."ⁱⁱ

i. C.M. Briquet, op. cit.

ii. C.M. Briquet, op. cit. vol. III, p. 520.

Size:

Varies from 28.3cms. by 18.4 cms. to 28.4 by 19 cms.

Binding:

Modern.

Number of Leaves:

13 leaves bound in a large, composite volume containing a wide variety of material, including many seventeenth century letters. They contain ll. 93-140 and 189-764 of La Belle Dame sans Mercy.

Pagination:

The pages are now numbered 164-176 in pencil in a modern hand. The numbers 250-262 are written in red ink on each page but have been crossed out in pencil.

The number 50 is also written in the top right hand corner of f. 164a, presumably by Ayscough.

Collation:

This is impossible to determine, since the leaves have all been broken at the back and pasted on to stubs of new paper, as have the other items in the volume.

Catchwords:

None.

Signatures: Loops of b, d, h and l are wide, and h also has a loop

below. None. l is circular; g resembles a figure 8; both the long r and 2- or z-shaped r are used; a occurs in

Condition: l and long g form; r is often of the type

Lines 1-92, 141-188 and 765-856 of La Belle Dame sans Mercy are missing. This indicates a loss of two leaves at the beginning, one leaf between folios 164 and 165 as they are now numbered, and two leaves again at the end of the poem, assuming the copy to have been complete originally.

Some of the pages are very discoloured, but the writing is still easily legible.

Layout of Page:

There are three stanzas to a page.

There is no heading or running title. Alternate stanzas are attributed to Lamant and La Dame as in other copies of the poem. There seems to be no evidence of the history of this

No pricking is now visible: the frame lines are ruled in dry-point and measure approximately 11.8 by 17.9 cms. latter part

There is no decoration whatever, apart from some flourishes to the ascenders of the first line of a page. of his to the British

Museum.

Handwriting:

1. The hand is late fifteenth century, large, loose and fairly current. The letter a is often current, with a large upper

p. 114). According to St. John Brooke, St. John Brooke, St. John Brooke, The Grant

loop; the loops of b, d, h and l are wide, and h also has a loop below the line; the letter e is circular; g resembles a figure 8; both the long r and 2- or z-shaped r are used; s occurs in both the sigma and long s forms; v is often of the type resembling a b, while w is a complicated looped figure, basically two v's of the b type, with an additional loop over the curve of the second v.

Correction:

Some correction was done by the scribe who copied out the text.

Other Marginalia:

None.

History:

There seems to be no evidence of the history of this particular copy of La Belle Dame sans Mercy before it came into the possession of Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753) in the latter part of the ~~sixteenth~~^{seventeenth} or the first half of the ~~sixteenth~~^{eighteenth} century;ⁱ and eventually passed with other manuscripts of his to the British Museum.

i. Sloane "had already become a bibliophile" in 1696 (see G.R. de Beer, Sir Hans Sloane and the British Museum, Oxford 1953, p. 114). According to St. John Brooks, Sir Hans Sloane, The Great

Collector and his Circle, London 1954, p. 196, in 1725 Sloane already had 2666 volumes of MSS, "the greatest part of them relating to physic and natural history, travel &c....", and at the time of his death in 1753 Sloane had about 50000 books and manuscripts. See also the Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford 1921-2, Vol. XVIII pp. 379-380.

1810-1819, Vol. II (1812) pp. 515-520. This description was

Date: Before the ten missing pages were added in facsimile, so that

This can only be roughly estimated on the evidence of the script. This copy of the poem perhaps belongs to the very end of the fifteenth century.

1933
1935, pp. 114-115.

Title Page:

There is no general title page. The books were originally to have been issued in three parts which are now bound together in the British Museum copy.¹

1. E.G. Duff in The Printers, Stationers and Bookbinders of Westminster and London from 1476 to 1535, Cambridge 1906, p. 165 says: "In 1526 appeared an edition of Chaucer to which I think proper attention has not been paid. It is generally described as consisting only of the Canterbury Tales, but this is not the case. The Book was issued in various parts of which the Canterbury Tales is one, and other works were issued in other parts.

Pynson's Black Letter Chaucer British Museum

S.T.C. nos. 5086, 5088 and 5096.

Previous Descriptions:

1. Joseph Ames, Typographical Antiquities, augmented by William Herbert and enlarged by Thomas F. Dibdin in 4 volumes, London 1810-1819, Vol. II (1812) pp. 515-520. This description was made before the ten missing pages were added in facsimile, so that as a result The Canterbury Tales are said to come after La Belle Dame sans Mercy and to lack a title page.
2. E.P. Hammond, Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual, New York 1933, pp. 114-115.

Title Page:

There is no general title page. The books seem originally to have been issued in three parts which are now bound together in the British Museum copy.ⁱ

- i. E.G. Duff in The Printers, Stationers and Bookbinders of Westminster and London from 1476 to 1535, Cambridge 1906, p. 165 says: "In 1526 appeared an edition of Chaucer to which I think proper attention has not been paid. It is generally described as consisting only of the Canterbury Tales, but this is not the case. The Book was issued in various parts of which the Canterbury Tales is one, and other works were issued in other parts than

though no library contains a complete set. How many parts really existed I do not know, but it looks as if the intention had been to issue the complete works".

On the first recto of the first gathering of Troilus and Cressida, after four blank fly-leaves, is a woodcut of a man, woman and little girlⁱ, which is repeated on the verso, and above it the words:

¶ Here begynneth the boke of Troylus/ and Creseyde/ newly
prin// ted by a trewe/ cotype

in Black Letter type.

- i. See Edward Hodnett, English Woodcuts 1480-1535, Oxford 1935, fig. 158.
-

Troilus and Cressida comprises part I of the edition.

On the first recto of the first gathering of Part II, where a second set of signatures begins, is a woodcut of Fameⁱⁱ, which is repeated on the verso, and above it the words:

¶ Here begynneth the boke of fame// made by Geffray Chaucer:/
with dyuers other of / his workes.

in Black Letter type.

- ii. See E. Hodnett, op. cit., fig. ~~158~~ 169.

On the first recto of the first gathering of Part II, where a fresh set of signatures is again begun, is another woodcutⁱ with the heading:

¶ Here begynneth the boke of Caunter// bury tales/ dilygently and / truely corrected/ and / newly printed.

i. See Hodnett, op. cit., fig. 149.

Colophon:

Similarly there are three colophons. At the end of Part I, Troilus and Cressida, at the foot of the recto of the sixth and last leaf of gathering K is the colophon:

¶ Here endeth the boke of Troylus and / Creseyde/ emprinted at London in / flete strete by Rycharde / Pynson/ printer vnto / the kynges no//ble grace.

At the end of the second part on the recto of the last leaf of signature 'f' is the colophon:

¶ Imprinted at London in fletestrete/ / by Richarde Pynson/ printer / to the kynges most no//ble grace.

At the end of the third part:

¶ Thus endeth the boke of Caunterbury / tales. Imprinted at

London in flete / strete / by me Rycharde Pynson / printer unto
the kynges noble grace: and fynished the yere / of our / lorde
god a .M. CCCCC. / and .XXVI. the fourth day of June.

At the end of The Book of Fame, The Assemble of Foules,
La Belle Dame sans Mercy, The Complaint of Mary Magdalene and
the Letter of Dido to Aeneas are colophons ranging from a brief
indication of the title of the poem just printed, and the title
of what is to follow, to a eulogy of the author and his work
(following the Book of Fame) and a six-stanza exhortation to
to the reader to learn the moral of the poem he has just read
(following La Belle Dame sans Mercy).

Format:

Folio.

Layout of Page:

Two columns to a page: Part I, six stanzas to a column;
Part II, 48 lines to a column, or six 7-line stanzas, or five 8-line
stanzas and two lines to a column; Part III, 50 lines to a column.

Running titles are used throughout.

Collation and Signatures:

Part I: Troilus and Cressida, A-B⁶, C⁴, D⁶, E⁴, F⁶, G⁴, H⁶, I⁴, K⁶.

Part II: The House of Fame, etc., a⁶, b⁴, c⁶, d⁴, e-f⁶. (eiii
was originally omitted, and later supplied in ink.)

Part III: The Canterbury Tales, A-U⁶, X-Y⁴.

Catchwords:

Part I: ff. A6 verso and G4 recto and verso.

Part II: On almost every recto and verso.

Part III: None.

Contents:

Part I: ff. A2 recto-K6 recto. Chaucer's Troilus and Cressida.

Brown and Robbins no. 3327.

Part II: 1. ff. a2 recto-c3 recto. Chaucer's House of Fame.

Brown and Robbins no. 991.

2. ff. c4 recto-d2 recto. Chaucer's Parliament of Birds.

Brown & Robbins no. 3412,

3. ff. d2 verso-e3 verso. Sir Richard Ros's La Belle Dame sans Mercy. Brown & Robbins no. 1086, where this edition is not mentioned.

4. f. e4 recto. Chaucer's Truth. Brown and Robbins no. 809, where this edition is not mentioned.

5. ff. e4 recto-e5 recto. Morall prouerbes of Christyne, beg. "The great vertues of our elders notable". Not in Brown & Robbins.

6. ff. e5 recto-f3 recto. The Complaynt of Mary Magdalen^e Brown & Robbins no. 2759, where this is the earliest copy mentioned.

7. ff. f3 verso-f5 recto. The letter of Dydo to Eneas, beg. "Folke discomf_orte_d / bere heuy countenaunce." Not in Brown & Robbins.

8. ff. f5 verso-f6 recto Lydgate's Consulo quisque
eris. Brown & Robbins no. 1294, where Pynson's
 edition is not mentioned.

Part III: ff. Aii recto- Y3 verso. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.ⁱ
 Brown & Robbins no. 4019.

i. The 'Prohemye' to which is really that of Caxton.

Printer's Devices:

On the verso of the last leaf of Part I, after Troilus and
Cressida, is one of the devices used by Pynson and containing his
 monogramⁱⁱ. On the recto of the last leaf of the third section,
 containing the Canterbury Tales, are the arms of Richard Pynsonⁱⁱ.

ii. See R.B. McKerrow, Printers' and Publishers' Devices in
England and Scotland 1485-1640, Bibliographical Society
 Illustrated Monograph no. XVI, London 1913, nos. 44 and 35.

Ornaments:

A number of woodcuts are used. Those in the Canterbury
Tales were apparently copied by Pynson for his ?1492 edition of
 the Tales from those used by Caxton in his second (?1484) edition,
 and used again, or copies made from them, in 1526.ⁱⁱⁱ

iii. See Hodnett, op. cit., p. 3, where he describes this

relationship between the woodcuts used by the two printers, and also says that Caxton's woodcuts were inherited by de Worde and from him passed to Thomas Godfray, who used them in his 1532 edition. Hodnett reproduces some woodcuts from the Pynson edition of 1526: fig. 158 from Part I, Troilus and Cressida, figs. 169, 171 and 160 from Part II, The House of Fame, etc., (fig. 160 stands at the head of La Belle Dame sans Mercy), and figs. 149, 170 and 151 from Part III, The Canterbury Tales.

Other woodcuts in this volume are described but not reproduced.

Type:

88 lettre de forme

Date:

Part III is dated 4th June, 1526, according to the colophon; the other two parts probably belong to the same year, since the intention is obviously to make a complete edition of Chaucer.

Other Copies:

Condition:

According to the British Museum Catalogue, Parts II and III are imperfect: the last nine leaves of Part II and the title page of Part III have been supplied in facsimile.ⁱ

i. A pencil note in a modern hand on the fourth fly-leaf (recto)

reads: "The 'moral proverbes' and nine leaves following are supplied in Facsimile by Harris ----- from Mr. Huth's copy."

(Part I). After 508c in the note: "This with nos. 308b and

Previous History: the first edition of Chaucer's works.

At the top right hand corner of the recto of the first leaf is written "Wm. Herbert 1779." Facing this, in ink in a modern hand, on a piece of paper attached to the fourth fly-leaf, is written:

"Chaucer. Troilus. boke of Fame. Assemble of Foules. La bell dame. Canterbury Tales. fo. Pynson. 1526. This is the well-known copy of Pynson's second edition of Chaucer which had belonged to Herbert to the D. of Roxburgh and to Heber who has added an accurate collation of L' Bath's MSS of the Assemble of Foules the book is described with sufficient accuracy in Dibdin's of the third part (The Canterbury Tales) in 'King's C. C.' Herbert's Ames."

On the cover is a device with the motto "Pro Christo et Patria" and below this a shield round which is written 'Rt Honble Tho^s Grenville'.

Other Copies:

According to the Short Title Catalogueⁱ there are no other copies of parts I and II. There is another copy of part III, The Canterbury Tales, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

i. A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, A Short Title Catalogue of

Books printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad. 1475-1640. ~~Bibliographical Society~~. London 1926. Nos. 5086 (Part III), 5088 (Part II) and 5096 (Part I). After 5086 is the note: "This with nos. 5088 and 5096 may be called the first edition of Chaucer's works."

Ramageⁱ records copies of all three parts in Blackburn Public Library, Glasgow University Library, Leeds University Library and Lambeth Palace Library, London.

i. D. Ramage, A Finding-List of English Books to 1640 in Libraries in the British Isles, Durham 1958.

The Bibliographical Society's Handlistsⁱⁱ records another copy of the third part (The Canterbury Tales) in 'King's C. C.' (= King's College, Cambridge?).

ii. E.G. Duff, W.W. Greg, R.B. McKerrow, H.R. Plomer, A.W. Pollard, R. Proctor, Hand-Lists of Books Printed by London Printers 1501-1556, ~~Bibliographical Society~~. London 1913.

Bishopⁱⁱⁱ records no other copies in America, apart from the microfilm of this book in the Yale University Library and Harvard University Library.

iii. W.W. Bishop, A Checklist of American Copies of "Short

Title Catalogue" Books, Ann Arbor, ~~University of Michigan Press~~
 1950. ~~William Thynne's Black Letter Edition of Chaucer's Works,~~
 printed by Thomas Godfray, 1532. British Museum.
 S.T.C. no. 3063.

Previous Descriptions:

1. Joseph Ames, Typographical Antiquities, suggested by William Herbert and enlarged by Thomas F. Dibdin in four volumes, London 1810-1819, Vol. III (1816), pp. 62-63.
2. G.B. Kingsley and F.J. Furnivall ed., Francis Thynne's Annotated Edition, 1909. Early English Text Society, Vol. IX, London 1875, pp. 7-12, where Francis Thynne discusses this edition, made by his father, William Thynne.
3. J. Maskell, "Chaucer and his first editor, William Thynne" London Notes and Queries, Sixth Series Vol. VIII, 1883, p. 381.
4. F.R. Lounsbury, Studies in Chaucer, 3 Vols., London 1892, Vol. I, pp. 265-269, 430-436.
5. E.P. Hammond, Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual, New York 1933, pp. 116-118.

Title Page:

The Workes of / Geffray Chaw/car newly printed / with /
 dyners workes whi/che were neuer in/print before:/ As in the
 table more playnly / dothe appere:/ Cum privilegio.

The title-page border is described and reproduced by

Th. William Thynne's Black Letter Edition of Chaucer's Works,
 printed by Thomas Godfray, 1532. British Museum.
 S.T.C. no. 5068.

Previous Descriptions:

1. Joseph Ames, Typographical Antiquities, augmented by William Herbert and enlarged by Thomas F. Dibdin in four volumes, London 1810-1819, Vol. III (1816), pp. 62-65.
2. G.H. Kingsley and F.J. Furnivall edd., Francis Thynne's Animadversions, 1599. Early English Text Society, Vol. IX, London 1875, pp. 5-12, where Francis Thynne discusses this edition, made by his father, William Thynne.
3. J. Maskell, "Chaucer and his first editor, William Thynne" in Notes and Queries, Sixth Series Vol. VIII, ^{London} 1883, p. 381.
4. T.R. Lounsbury, Studies in Chaucer, 3 Vols., London 1892, Vol. I, pp. 265-269, 430-436.
5. E.P. Hammond, Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual, New York ~~1933~~ ¹⁹³³, pp. 116-118.

Title Page:

The Workes of / Geffray Chau/cer newly printed / with /
 dyuers workes whi/che were neuer in/print before:/ As in the
 table more playnly / dothe appere./ Cum priuilegio.

The title-page border is described and reproduced by

McKerrow and Fergusonⁱ. Gregⁱⁱ also describes the border, the block of which he believes Berthelet must have lent to Godfray for use in the 1532 Chaucer.

i. R.B. McKerrow and F.S. Ferguson, Title Page Borders in England and Scotland 1485-1640, Bibliographical Society Illustrated Monograph no. XXI, London 1932 (for 1931), p. 16 no. 19, and see also fig. 19.

ii. W.W. Greg, "Notes on the Types, Borders etc. used by Thomas Berthelet" in Transactions of the Bibliographical Society, VIII, October 1904 to March 1906, London 1907, p. 198 para. B.

The fact that this block was first used in a book printed by Berthelet has led some scholars to believe that the 1532 Chaucer was also printed by him, in spite of the evidence of the colophon. Greg rejects this idea however, on the grounds that the type is quite distinct from any that Berthelet ever used. The Godfray-Berthelet relationship has also been discussed by Duffⁱⁱⁱ, who places more faith on Leland's evidence^{iv} than does Lounsbury^{iv}, but is unwilling to believe that Berthelet actually printed the 1532 Chaucer.

iii. E.G. Duff, op. cit., pp. 156-7, and A Century of the English Book Trade, London 1905, p. 56.

~~pp. 156-7~~

iv. Leland names Berthelet as the printer: see T. Tyrwhitt ed., Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, London 1860, pp. iv-v note e, and T.R. Lounsbury, op. cit. I p. 139. Lounsbury gives an English translation of Leland's words, while Tyrwhitt quotes the original Latin and in a long explanatory note demonstrates why he thinks that Godfray, not Berthelet, is the printer of this edition.

Lounsbury, op. cit., I, pp. 146-7, voices grave doubts about the reliability of Leland.

Colophon:

folio CCCLxxxiii recto, at the head of the second column:

¶ "Thus endeth the Workes of Geffray / Chaucer. Printed at London / by Thomas Godfray. / The yere of our lorde .M. D. xxxii./ ¶ Cum priuilegio a rege indulto."

The -ul- of the last word is partly rubbed away where the paper is thin and creased.

Format:

Folio. Size of page: 22 by 31.7 cms. Printed area: 16 by 23.2 cms.

Layout of Page:

There are two columns to a page, between 47 and 48 lines to a

column, and in the stanzaic poems six 7-line stanzas or five 8-line stanzas and 3 lines to a column.

Running titles are used throughout.

Collation and Signatures:

The preliminaries, including title page, occupy four leaves, of which the second and third are signed Aii and Aiii. Only half a column of the last leaf was needed for introductory material, and the remaining three and a half columns (recto and verso) are filled with miscellaneous verse (see pp. 1142 below).

The collation is as follows:

A⁴, B-Z⁶, Aa-Pp⁶, Qq⁹, Rr-Zz⁶, Aaa-Vvv⁶. The signature G.g.ii is used for both the first and second leaf of the gathering.

Foliation:

The first leaves are not numbered. Numbering begins on folio E1 with the number xiii. This is in fact the thirteenth leaf of The Knight's Tale, the preliminaries, title page and Prologue to the Tales filling the other ten of the twenty-two unnumbered leaves.

Folios after this on which a number has not been printed, although a gap is allowed in the sequence, are (in modern numbering) 18, 127, 169, 235, 324. All except the first of these are title pages to separate poems. The number lxxxv is used twice, lxxxiv being omitted altogether.

After folio 219 there are three unnumbered leaves, and then folio 220. This occurs in the unusual nine-leaf gathering, of which the first four leaves are signed Qqi-iiii, and seems to indicate that leaves had to be inserted for some reason.

Other mistakes are: CCxliiii used for p. 247; CClxvi used for p. 276; CCC used twice, followed by CCCi etc; CCiiii written for 304; CCCxvi repeated and CCCxvii omitted.

The numbering ends on the last leaf with CCCLxxxiii.

Catchwords:

Catchwords are given on each recto and verso.

Contents:ⁱ

i. The page numbers given are those actually printed, even where these are wrong, see above.

ff. ~~Aii~~ recto-~~Aiii~~ recto The Preface ¶ "To the kynges hyghnesse/ my / most gracious soueraygne lorde Henry / the eight/ by the grace of god kyng of / Englande and of Fraunce/ defensor of / the fayth/ and lorde of Irland".ⁱⁱ

ii. This Preface, written by Sir Brian Tuke for William Thynne, has been printed by E. Flügel, Neuenglisches Lesebuch, Halle 1895, pp. 304-306 and by W. W Skeat in his Introduction to

The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and Others, Being a reproduction in facsimile of the first collected edition of 1532 from the copy in the British Museum. ~~Oxford~~ ^{London} 1905. pp. xxii-xxiv.

For a discussion of Sir Brian Tuke's authorship of this Preface see Leland, as quoted by T.R. Lounsbury, Studies in Chaucer Vol. I p. 139, and Henry Bradshaw, as quoted in Furnivall's Hindwords to the EETS edition of Francis Thynne's Animadversions ed. G.H. Kingsley and revised by F.F. Furnivall, IX, ^{London} 1875, p. xxvi. Mr. Bradshaw describes a copy in Clare College, Cambridge, in which Sir Brian Tuke has himself written at the top of Thynne's Dedication:

"This preface I Sir Bryan Tuke knight wrot at the request of Mr Clarke of the Kechyn then being / tarying for the tyde at Grenewich."

f. aiii recto First Table of Contents.

ff. aiii verso-aiv recto Second Table of Contents, giving page numbers.

1. ff. Aiv recto-verso. 'Eight goodly questyons with their aunswers'. Brown & Robbins no. 3183.
2. f. Aiv verso. Hoccleve's Balade au tres noble Roy Henry le quint. Brown & Robbins no. 3788.
3. f. Aiv verso. Hoccleve's Balade au tres honourable compaignie du Garter. Brown & Robbins no. 4251.
4. f. Aiv verso. A six-line 'Prophecy', sometimes attributed to Chaucer, beg. "Whan faithe fayleth in preestes sawes".

Brown & Robbins no. 3943.

5. f. Aiv verso. Four lines beg. "It falleth for euery gentylman". Brown & Robbins no. 1619.
6. f. Aiv verso. Four lines beg. "It cometh by kynde of gentyl blood". Brown & Robbins no. 1618.ⁱ

i. These last three items were printed together in the same order by Caxton.

7. ff. Bii recto-Zvi verso. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. Brown & Robbins no. 4019.
8. ff. Aaii recto-Gg vi verso. The Romaunt of the Rose. Brown & Robbins no. 2092.
9. ff. Hhii recto-Qqiii recto. Chaucer's Troilus and Cressida. Brown & Robbins no. 3327.
10. ff. Qqiii recto-Qqvi verso, occupying four pages, three of which are unnumbered. Robert Henryson's Testament of Cressid. Brown & Robbins no. 285.
11. ff. Qq vii recto-Ssvi recto. Chaucer's Legend of Good Women. Brown & Robbins no. 100.
12. f. Ssvi verso. Eight stanzas and envoy wrongly headed "A goodly balade of Chaucer", beg. "Mother of norture best beloued of al". Brown & Robbins no. 2223.
13. ff. Ttii recto-Bbbi^{verso}. Chaucer's Boece.
14. ff. Bbbii recto-Cccii verso. Chaucer's Book of the Duchess. Brown & Robbins no. 1306.

15. ff. Cccii-recto - Ccciii recto. Lenvoy de Chaucer à Bukton. Brown & Robbins no. 2262.
 16. ff. Ccciii recto-Dddi recto. Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls. Brown & Robbins no. 3412.ⁱ
-
- i. A roundel headed "Qui bien ayme tarde oublie" is inserted between stanzas 97 and 98; see Brown & Robbins no. 2375.
-
17. ff. Dddi recto- Dddii verso. Lydgate's Flower of Courtesy. Brown & Robbins no. 1487.
 18. ff. Dddiv recto-verso. Chaucer's Complaint unto Pity. Brown & Robbins no. 2756.
 19. ff. Dddiv verso-Eeeiii verso. Sir Richard Ros's La Belle Dame sans Mercy. Brown & Robbins no. 1086.
 20. ff. Eeeiii verso- Eeev verso. Chaucer's Anelida and Arcite. Brown & Robbins no. 3670.
 21. ff. Eeevi recto-Fffiv recto. The Assembly of Ladies. Brown & Robbins no. 1528.
 22. ff. Fffv recto-Hhhii recto. Chaucer's Treatise on the Astrolabe.
 23. ff. Hhhii recto-Hhhvi verso. Lydgate's Complaint of the Black Knight. Brown & Robbins no. 1507
 24. ff. Hhhvi verso-Iii i verso. Twenty-five 7-line stanzas headed 'A preyse of Women', beg. "Al tho y^e lyste of women euy1 to speke". Brown & Robbins no. 228.

25. ff. Iii i verso - Kkkvi verso. Chaucer's House of Fame.
Brown & Robbins no. 991.
26. ff. Lllii recto - Rrrii recto. Thomas Usk's Testament of Love.
perhaps by Chaucer Brown & Robbins no. 1001.
27. ff. Rrrii recto-Rrrvi verso, The Lamentation of Mary Magdalene. Brown & Robbins no. 2759.
28. ff. Rrrvi verso - Sssiii verso. The Remedy of Loue
beg. "Seyng the manyfolde inconuenyence".
Brown and Robbins no. 3084. *where this edition is not mentioned.*
29. ff. Sssiii verso-Sssv verso. Chaucer's Complaint of Mars.
Brown & Robbins no. 913.
30. ff. Sssv verso-Sssvi recto. Chaucer's Complaint of Venus.
Brown & Robbins no. 3542.
31. ff. Sssvi recto-Ttiii recto. Hoccleve's Letter of Cupid.
Brown & Robbins no. 666.
32. ff. Ttiii recto- Ttiii verso. Lydgate's Balade in Commenda-
tion of Our Lady. Brown & Robbins no. 99.
33. ff. Ttiii verso - Ttiv verso. To My Soverain Lady, beg.
"I haue none englysshe conuenyent ^{and} digne"ⁱ. Brown and
Robbins no. 1309.

- i. ^{Items 32 and 33}
~~These two poems~~ are printed without a break, and the running
title 'A balade of our Lady' is used throughout.

34. ff. Ttiv verso - Vvv i recto. Gower's poem in Praise of
Peace, addressed to Henry IV, beg. "O Noble worthy Kyng
Henry the ferthe". Brown & Robbins no. 2587 (where the

first line is quoted as "O worthi noble....."etc., from the manuscript.)

35. ff. Vvv i recto-Vvv iii recto. The Cuckoo and the Nightingale, perhaps by Clanvoweⁱ. Brown & Robbins no. 3361.

i. See above, p. 7 note ii.

36. f. Vvv ii verso. Balade with envoy to 'Alison', beg. "O leude booke with thy foule rudenesse". Brown & Robbins no. 2479.

37. ff. Vvv iii recto-Vvv iv recto. Scogan's Moral Balade beg. "My noble sonnes and eke my lordes dere". Brown & Robbins no. 2264.ⁱⁱ

iii. This poem includes, between the thirteenth and fourteenth stanzas, on f. Vvv iii verso, the three stanzas of Chaucer's Gentilesse, Brown & Robbins no. 3348.

38. f. Vvv iv recto. Chaucer's Lak of Stedfastnesse. Brown Robbins no. 3190.

39. ff. Vvv iv recto-verso. Chaucer's Truth. Brown & Robbins no. 809.

40. f. Vvv iv verso. Chaucer's Fortune. Brown & Robbins no. 3661.

41. f. Vvv v recto. L'envoy de Chaucer à Scogan. Brown & Robbins no. 3747.

42. f. Vvv v recto. Lydgate's Instructions to the Estates to
to Follow the Virtues. Brown & Robbins no. 920.

43. f. Vvv v recto. Chaucer's Complaint to his Purse.
Brown & Robbins no. 3787.

44. ff. Vvv v verso - Vvv vi recto. Lydgate's 'A Wikked Tong
wol alway deme Amis'. Brown & Robbins no. 653.

After the colophon, on the recto of the last leaf (Vvv vi) is the Latin epitaph of Chaucer written by Stephan Surigon. It was previously printed by Caxton at the end of his edition of Chaucer's translation of Boethius, and was said by Leland to have been written at Caxton's request.ⁱ

i. See also C.F.E. Spurgeon, Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion (1357-1900). Chaucer Society nos. 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55 and 56. London 1914-25, part I pp. 59-60, where the epitaph is printed.

The contents are also listed by Lelandⁱ who gives the titles in Latin and omits several, and by Lounsburyⁱⁱ whose list is almost complete, except that he does not distinguish between the two poems printed by Thynne under the same running title, 'A balade of our Lady', nor does he separate the two Balades by Hoccleve on folio A iv verso.

i. See T.R. Lounsbury, op. cit. pp. 139-140.

ii. Lounsbury, op. cit. pp. 431-434.

Skeat gives a full list of contents on pp. ix-xi of his Introduction to the facsimile reproduction of the 1532 Chaucer, but I have thought it advisable to give a complete list of contents here too, since the facsimile was issued only in a limited edition. Professor Skeat also discusses the text and probable antecedents of each piece on pp. xxv-xliv of his Introduction.ⁱ

i. For remarks on the text of The Canterbury Tales and the Caxton conclusion to The House of Fame, see also Hammond, op. cit. p. 117. Tyrwhitt remarks (op. cit. p. vii) "With respect to the Canterbury Tales, I am under the necessity of observing, that, upon the whole, they received no advantage from the edition of 1532. Its material variations from Caxton's second edition are all, I think, for the worse." He then gives some examples of disarrangement in the text and the addition of spurious matter.

Ornaments:

Woodcuts of most of the pilgrims are given at the heads of the appropriate tales. All but the Knight and the Squire are taken from Caxton's second edition of The Canterbury Talesⁱⁱ, and some figures are used more than once.

ii. See E. Hodnett, op. cit., p.3.

The same cut is used for the Merchant, the Summoner, the Franklin and the Manciple, another for the Clerk of Oxenford and the Canon's Yeoman, a third does duty both for the Second Nun and the Prioress, and is reproduced by Bladesⁱ with the caption 'The Wife of Bath', since it is so used by Caxton. A reproduction of one other woodcut from this book is given by Hodnettⁱⁱ.

i. William Blades, The Biography and Typography of William Caxton, London 1897, p. 293.

ii. Hodnett, op. cit. fig. 224. On page 102 Hodnett also cites fig. 4 as being reproduced from a woodcut in Godfray's book. Godfray seems only to have used part of the woodcut however, since Hodnett's reproduction shows a tree and a church on a hill, which are not present in the 1532 Chaucer. Godfray's version also lacks a border, and measures 88 by 82 mms.

Type:

See Isaacⁱⁱⁱ and Updike^{iv} for reproductions with notes on the type used.

iii. Frank Isaac, English and Scottish Printing Types 1501-35, 1508-41, Bibliographical Society Facsimiles and Illustrations no. II, Oxford 1930, fig. 77.

iv. D.B. Updike, Printing Types, their History, Forms and Use,

Massachusetts
 Cambridge, ~~Harvard University Press~~ and London 1922, Vol. II
 p. 126 and fig. 282. (But note that Updike is ^{not} ~~scarcely~~ correct
 in attributing the second edition of this book, which appeared in
 1542, to Pynson, who is known to have died early in 1530 - see
 E.G. Duff, A Century of the English Book Trade, ~~Bibliographical~~
~~Society~~, London 1905, p. 127.)

Date: ~~see in the British Isles, Durham 1936.~~
 1532.

Condition: ~~see above, no. 10-11 is not mentioned here however.~~

Well preserved. ~~long list of American libraries in which~~
~~microfilm copies are to be seen:~~

Previous History: ~~Univ. of California 2) Henry E. Huntington~~

~~Libr~~ The name of Thomas Grenville is stamped on the cover; I
 have found no clues to earlier ownership. ~~3) B.C. 5) Wallisley~~

~~College Library 6) Chapin Library, Williams College, Massachusetts~~

Other Copies: ~~Gallery Library, Baltimore 1, Maryland 8) New~~

~~York~~ The Short Title Catalogue¹ lists four copies besides this one.

They are to be found in 1) The Bodleian Library, Oxford ~~2) Bodleian~~

2) Cambridge University Library 3) The H.E. Huntington Library

4) The Chapin Library. ~~Chapin Library.~~

i. A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, A Short-Title Catalogue of
Books printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English

Books printed Abroad, 1475-1640. ~~Bibliographical Society~~, London 1926.

Ramageⁱ cites four other copies in Britain, at 1) Aberdeen University 2) Glasgow University 3) London University and 4) University College, London.

i. David Ramage, A Finding-List of English Books to 1640 in Libraries in the British Isles, Durham 1958.

The copy described by Bradshaw belonging to Clare College, Cambridge (see above, pp. 110-111^{note ii}) is not mentioned here however.

Bishopⁱⁱ gives a long list of American libraries in which microfilm copies are to be seen:

- 1) Clark Library, Univ. of California 2) Henry E Huntington Library, San Marino, California 3) Yale University Library
 - 4) Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington 3, D.C. 5) Wellesley College Library 6) Chapin Library, Williams College, Massachusetts
 - 7) Walters Art Gallery Library, Baltimore 1, Maryland 8) New York Public Library 9) Pierpont Morgan Library, New York
 - 10) University Heights Library, New York 11) Carl H. Pforzheimer Library, English Literature 12) University of Texas Library
 - 13) University of Wisconsin Library.
-

ii. W.W. Bishop, A Checklist of American Copies of 'Short-Title Catalogue' Books, Ann Arbor, ~~Univ. of Michigan Press~~, 1950.

Characteristics of each Scribe

During the collation of the manuscripts of this text certain habits characteristic of the scribe concerned became apparent,

2) The characteristics of individual scribes
of establishing the text, I give here brief notes on the idiosyncrasies of each scribe. In a number of cases they confirm the findings of earlier students of the manuscripts.

Fairfax 16

The consistent and reliable orthography of the scribe are qualities which help to make this manuscript the most suitable for use as the basic text for an edition, a fact which editors of other texts contained in Fairfax 16 have also remarked on¹. The spelling only very occasionally reflects personal idiosyncrasies, of little serious importance to the text. The most striking of these are the use of *w* in place of *u/y* (see ll. 50, 222, 257, 360, 381, 393 and 425), and a tendency to make words end in *-y* (see ll. 415, 509, 554, 606 and 835.).

¹ See W.W. Skeat ed., *Chaucer's Works* Vol. 1, 2nd ed., Oxford 1899, pp. 51-52 and E.P. Hammond, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

Characteristics of each Scribe

During the collation of the manuscripts of this text certain habits characteristic of the scribe concerned became apparent, and since such general tendencies have a bearing on the problem of establishing the text, I give here brief notes on the idiosyncracies of each scribe. In a number of cases they confirm the findings of earlier students of the manuscripts.

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i. See W.W. Skeat ed., Chaucer's Works Vol. I, 2nd. ed. Oxford 1899, pp. 51-52 and E.P. Hammond, op. cit., p. 334.

Two more serious charges levelled against the scribe are his inconsistent handling of final -e, and a marked tendency to omit words.ⁱ The former, whatever its effect on Chaucerian texts transcribed, need not concern us in connection with La Belle Dame sans Mercy, written at a date when final -e had ceased to be of ^{much} metrical importance. The latter is not confined to the immediate scribe of the Fairfax manuscript but seems to originate, to some extent at least, in an ancestor of the group, to which MS Harley 372 also belongs.ⁱⁱ Of the thirty or more instances in which he omits a word, only a third seem to be the responsibility of the Fairfax scribe: in the rest the Harley scribe makes the same omission, which seems to indicate that the omissions took place in a common ancestor.

i. See E.P. Hammond, "The Nine-Syllabled Pentameter Line in some Post-Chaucerian Manuscripts", Modern Philology XXIII, ~~Chicago~~ (1925-6) pp. 131, 138, 147 and 151, and W.W. Skeat ed., Chaucer's Works Vol. III, 2nd. ed., Oxford 1900, pp. 1-11.

ii. See below, pp. 132-134, 142.

The effect of these losses is to spoil the metre (the words omitted are not always of much importance to the sense), and metre is also affected by the occasional loss or addition of syllables through a variation in spelling, or the introduction of an extra word. For examples of this see ll. 265 yf ^fHLT~~SP~~Th yf that F

324 the]om F 385 fantise]HTCSPTh fantasye F 442 Where]
 HTCSPTh Wheryn F 445 seche]HTCSPTh beseche F 740 enemy]
⁴⁴TCSPTh enmy F 835 parte]HLTCTh party F. This means
 that the Fairfax scribe cannot be relied on where the rhythm of
 the verse is in question, but his text is invaluable for its more
 pedestrian virtues of basically sound and consistent orthography.

Harley 372

The substantive readings of this manuscript generally agree very closely with those of Bodleian MS Fairfax 16 (see below, pp. 132-4, 142). The Harley scribe makes good some of the omissions of Fairfax 16, but himself leaves out words, so that in this respect there is little to choose between the two manuscripts. It is the orthography that chiefly distinguishes Harley 372 from other texts of the poem. H. very often writes -oo-, and also doubles other letters, particularly a, e and t. The spelling -ie- is very frequent, noticeably in the word chier (ll. 117, 136, 161, 178 etc.), wieng (l. 2), driewe (l. 163), daungiere (l. 180), herbier (l. 191), but in many more as well. Some other eccentric spellings are kneuh (l. 145), dieulye (l. 329), kurressh (l. 389), aboughte (l. 421), ought (l. 575) and rosse (l. 797).

The corrector who worked his way systematically through the Harley text of La Belle Dame sans Mercy (see above, pp. 40-41 and below, pp. 139-40¹⁴²⁻³) sometimes corrects the spelling and occasionally gives an unambiguous in place of an ambiguous one. See, for example, ll. 165 god]H¹ good H² 340 sewe]H¹ shew H² 413

bridde]H¹ bird H² 575 ought]H¹ out H².

Longleat 258

The Longleat scribe seems to have been a rather careless worker; he frequently makes minor omissions, substitutions and additions, occasionally serious but usually trivial. For examples see ll. 36 in]om L 56 fele]fynde L 150 his]om L 154 the]a L etc. On the other hand he often gives the correct reading where F, the more careful worker, does not, which suggests that he perhaps had a better text from which to copy in the first place. See examples in ll. 47 My pen]^{TL}~~LC~~PTH² Myn eyn FH¹ neuer haue knowle^{ch}ch]LC haue no knowlych FT haue knowlege H¹ neuer knowe PTH² 66 was]HLTCPTh were F speryd]LTPTh² sprad FH¹C 88 yet I]LPTh I]HTC om F 134 it]LTCSPTh om FH 145 shote]LTCPTH² seght F sight H¹ 148 I or]LTPTh² or y C ther FH¹ 204 hete]LTCSPTh² hert FH¹ 231 eschewyng]^{TL}~~LC~~SPTh² escusyng FH¹ 249 your^e]thought is]LCSPTh your^{ff} hert ys T ye do ful FH etc.

Peculiarities in his orthography are the use of heim/theim spellings (see ll. 53, 56, 63, 102, 157, 161, 192, 391 etc.), the spelling doith, used with some consistency (see ll. 123 etc.), the writing dud for did (ll. 70, 71, 103, 129, 133, 207⁸ etc.) and a tendency to confuse the number of minims he has written (see ll. 225 my]in/ni/m L 568 comyng]connyng L etc.).

Trinity R. 3. 19

The scribe of the manuscript Trinity R. 3. 19 evidently cared very little about his responsibility for accuracy and faithfulness to the exemplar. The footnotes to the text will shew how very frequently T varies, and from the Analysis of Variation it will appear that few categories of scribal error lack examples in plenty from the Trinity manuscript. This in spite of the fact that he seems to be following a fairly good text, in which many of the errors of the Fairfax-Harley tradition (see below, pp. 132-4, 142) are not found. For examples see ll. 47 My pen]^{TL}~~HL~~CPTH² Myn
eyn FH¹ 66 was]HLTCPTH were F speryd]LTPTh² sprad FH¹C.
77 thought]LTCPTH thoughtes FH 103 dyd seruyce]TLCS serued
FH deedly seruauntes PTh 148 I or]LTPTh² or y C ther FH¹
174 wyse]TCPTh² vice FH¹L 204 hete]LTCSPTh² hert FH¹ etc.

Apart from ordinary carelessness (as in ll. 3 not]om T
rose]arose T 26 boldyd]voldyd T 98 morne]mone T 138 al
the]om T 170 their]the PTh suche T eyn]oon then T
190 thought tyme]hym thought T etc.) Trinity's copyist seems to have been satisfied to reproduce the general sense of his exemplar rather than copy it exactly. Some examples are: 34 The
deth hath take]Dethe hath fro me take T 39 I surely]yet therwith T
126 as after]for soth to T 128 His speche trembled]He spake
tremblyng T 132 nothing]then nat T 217 then gan he]he gan
to T 287 me hath ychasyd]hath me enbrasyd T 534 And when
him list]When he T 747 Wherfore to ladyes what men speke or
pray]Wherfore these louers whatsoeuer they say T.

If meaning was more important than² form for the Trinity scribe, immediate sense was more important than general meaning, and he often introduces readings which seem at first glance to be more satisfactory in a given phrase, but which either destroy the sense of the larger context, or else materially alter the poet's meaning; the scribe was particularly likely to introduce such variants where he misunderstood the text. The following are a few examples: 27 That]That to T 72 It causid nother Ioy nor heuynese]Hit causeth no ioy but heuynesse T 164 drede]louyd T 219 vnhappy]happy T 377 laugh]dysplesyn T 592 lovely]lothely T.

Cambridge Univ. Ff. 1. 6

In the matter of substantive readings this is an extremely good text, with relatively few departures from the readings presumed to be original, and even fewer serious errors. Moreover twice it is the only text containing the variant for which there is the strongest presumption of originality (l. 174 apert]C pert FHLTPTh 814 ^{avauntours}avauntours]C adventures FLTPTh aventure H). Unfortunately it is a late text which reflects the much less stable orthography of the latter part of the fifteenth century, and is therefore not suitable for use as a basis for the edition. The best way to examine the kind of spellings used is by reading through a passage in the manuscript, but for the sake of convenience I give a few examples here:

150 stable]stabill C 333 Iangelyth]iangulith C 463

save]saffe C 476 foloweth]folouth C 518 fairer]fayerer C
 522 trouble]trobull C. Frequent Cambridge spellings are sch
 for sh, as in ll. 36 languyshyng]languyschyng C 59 She]
 Sche C (see also ll. 73, 673, 674) 97 shewed]schewd C
 120 shamefastnesse]schamfastnesse C 342 Sharpe]Scharpe C
 444 shal]schale C (see also ll. 463 and 659) 751 shewyth]
 schewth C 768 banysshed]banyscht C 803 shorter]schortyr C;
s for c, as in ll. 275 circumstaunce]sircumstaunce C 286
 certayn]sertayne C (see also ll. 363, 548, 752); and final -e
 is added or omitted in a quite haphazard fashion.

Sloane 1710

The Sloane manuscript, now containing only just under three quarters of the poem (see pp. 93 above), seems to have been written by a moderately careful copyist who nevertheless introduces variant readings of his own fairly often: a brief glance at the footnotes will reveal their relative frequency, and the examples given below shew their nature. They are for the most part trivial:

269 oon]a S an other]and other S (where an ambiguous spelling is wrongly interpreted, see also ll. 585 seweth]shewith S and 757 her]hyr S) 280 your]om S 283 for]om S 284 no]om S 300 lesse]lest S (giving a more emphatic reading by using the superlative) 323 he]om S 327 wordes]the wurdis S (here he anticipates a word used later in the line) 330 wondres] wondis S 356 with]by S (where one preposition is replaced by another) 365 I]me S 367 yow]om S 368 eke]om S (in

the last two cases words not absolutely necessary to the sense are omitted) 371 ryghtwysly]wyssely S 406 they]that they S (in this and the following example words making little difference to the sense are added) 424 manere]maner of S 474 shulde]ne shuld S (where the addition of another negative makes the statement more emphatic). Some more important variants are: 203 penaunce]sorowe S 476 foloweth]felyth S. 563 prison]person S 659 hem]hevyn S 684 wage]waye C vyance S.

The Sloane scribe shows a certain tendency to confuse the letters c and t when copying, as in ll. 110 Which]Wyth S 503 such]sith 567 such]sith. He also tends to repeat letters and sounds, as in ll. 130 put playn, 292 suneth dieth 317 yoy 480 no nomo and 608 all all.

Pynson and Thynne

These two sixteenth century printed versions of the poem can be considered together, since they nearly always agree in substantive variation and even, to a remarkable extent, in spelling. The long period of time which had elapsed between the writing of La Belle Dame sans Mercy and its setting up in printⁱ had seen many linguist^{ic} changes, and these two texts introduce a large number of unoriginal variants. They are in fact the least reliable witnesses now available for establishing the text.

i. Between the earliest known manuscript (Fairfax 16, dated c. 1450) and the Pynson text of 1526 is a gap of nearly 80 years.

The special position of these two texts in being set up by compositors, not transcribed by hand, is discussed in the section 'Analysis of Variation' (see below, pp. 165-166).

The orthography has naturally undergone some modernisation; Pynson has also introduced a very little punctuation in lines 41 and 43, where brackets enclose alas and as I take respectively, and in line 801 where he uses a colon after said. Thynne adopts the brackets but not the colon. Pynson's compositor made occasional slips, as in lines 568 agayue for agayne and 569 seme for sene.

3) The genetic relationship of the eight texts

The Genetic Relationship of the Eight Texts

In this section I propose to examine the evidence for genetic relationship between the texts. For this purpose I have taken into account all agreements in unoriginal readings, except of course those variants which are certainly a question of spelling, dialect or grammar. This seemed to me to be a more satisfactory method of conducting such an enquiry than either relying on a selected group of striking variants, with all the possibilities of error in judgement and interpretation which this involves, or in any way risking the inclusion of agreements in right reading, which are not evidence of genetic relationship.

In order to discover these agreements in unoriginal reading I was guided by a number of well-defined tendencies of variation, revealed in a close examination of variant readings. These tendencies, knowledge of which provides a means of distinguishing original from unoriginal variants where the choice is not immediately clear, are discussed below (see pp. 146 ff.), where I believe they are firmly established by the weight of supporting evidence.

A number of variational groups of two manuscripts occur with

some frequency: among these F shows ^{close}~~striking~~ agreement with H, both in substantive variation and in disarrangement of the text - a physical disarrangement occurring in an archetype from which both these manuscripts were presumably copied.ⁱ

-
- i. Skeat demonstrates how the present order of lines came about in his edition Chaucerian and Other Pieces, Oxford 1897, pp. li-lvii. The stanzas are disarranged in groups of 6, and the accident must have happened to a manuscript with 3 stanzas to the page, 6 to a leaf. After being written, the outer leaves of the 3 central sheets of a gathering were turned back to front, and the two centre sheets changed places, giving the present order of lines in the poem: 1-428, 669-716, 525-572, 477-524, 621-668, 573-620, 429-476, 717-856. Fairfax 16 has just over 4 stanzas to a page, and Harley 372 has 6 stanzas to a page, so the accident ^{could} ~~have~~ not ^{ed} happen to either of these two manuscripts, but must have occurred in an earlier copy of the poem.
-

Between 50 and 60 agreements between F and H in unoriginal readings occur:

28	began]begynne	47	My pen]Myn eyn	77	thought]thoughtes
103	dyd seruyce]serued	105	ther]they	124	in]om
		126	noon]		
not	134	it]om	148	I or]ther	184
					alone]om
				204	hete]hert
231	eschewyng]escusyng	235	right]even	238	alwey]ay to
239	for]om	249	your thought is]ye do ful	282	gret]om

301 it]I 317 that]om 318 al]om 330 al]of 331 away
 their hedes]their hedes away 337 that]om 341 awayte]abayte
 344 fele and know]know ^{and} fele 347 ~~w~~hen]^when that 352 Yet]It
 394 but]not 401 whether]wher 403 were]be 416 him]om
 419 Am]And 420 lesse sett]sett lesse 424 all]of all
 438 tendyrly]best and tendyrly 440 no]om 446 it]om 450
 a curteyse]curteysy 467 nor]no 475 hys]om 495 It]I
 509 He]Who 529 not]om 538 sewte]suerte 547 the]om
 559 deuour]dewtis 566 That]Which 619 gret]om 629 gret]om
 643 shal I]I shal 659 as]is 750 erth]deth 763 hertes]om
 792 ye shal]shal ye 803 shorter]short 833 al]om 845 Like]
 Wilde.

Considering the comparative brevity of the poem, this variational group is exceptionally persistent and may be presumed to be genetic.

The other variational groups of two manuscripts are as follows:

(I retain the order in which sigils are usually cited.)

FT

1. 47 neuer haue knowlych]haue no knowlych 65 the forser hath]
 hath the forser

FC

171 stone]a stone

HT

237 that]om

LT

67 that]om 195 ther]ther as 622 no]om

LC

74 Al my]My good 159 louer]om 711 Ought]Ough

LS

412 yt]him 557 must it]it must 673 in]on

ETh

189 his]this 198 nere]more 813 Ye]The 817 Line omitted

822 In]Of 824 Line omitted 825 folowe]foule

TC

355 non]nat 416 not him]hym nat 523 he also]also he

597 he]ye

TS

399 your]hys 557 that]hit

CS

117 he]om 657 myne]mynd

PTh

21 Yet at the]And yet at 26 boldyd]boldly 27 That]Whiche

saide]om 41 is it]dothe it 42 ease]of ease 43 I take]
 as I take 46 Were constrenyd]Constrayned were 49 And]Tho
 49 if]om 60 with hir]here vndir hir]within this 74 Al]om
 77 my]om 83 but]a 103 dyd seruyce]deedly seruauntes
 106 syttyng]om 117 good]om ryght]om 144 the]om 145 And]
 For 146 fedred]fearfull 148 gastes]iestes 151 tendirly]
 wonderly 155 ruful]wofull 155 semblaunce]penaunce 159 louer]
 man he 169 that]so 170 their]the 178 here]of hir]of
 186 withes]wrethes 188 myght no man]no man might 193 a
 certeyn of]of a certayne 195 And]om 224 kyns]kynde 228 It]
 Yet 251 that]om 262 hath]om 265 to]ye may 282 gret
 plesaunce]displesaunce 310 grete desire]haue therin 312 to]
 of 320 maner]maner of 322 of]by 326 of]in 355 the]om
 356 with]in 363 no^t]and certayn]om 366 as]om 386 These
 ben]Thus be man of]maner 389 currisch]cursed 403 yf]of
 404 Then]That 412 yt]them 434 to]as to 436^{ey for}]deseruynge]
 desyring 444 may not]can neuer 456 al]om 456 fame]name
 461 neuer formed]founded neuer 492 fall to]to fall
 502 that(2)]om 503 yift]a gyfte 505 hertes]an hert
 506 in]to 513 feyled]feyned 518 Secheth]Seche a 529 yt]I
 may not]ne may 531 but]be but 533 folily]no foly 626 so]
om 627 high]his 638 which]as 644 that]om 645 ye]it
 650 sumwhat haue]haue some 661 Who]Ye hymself]yourselfe
 he]ye 662 In love he]That in love 664 not]ye nat 665 in]
 as in 670 fayle]lacke 674 to]do 675 the]my 684 That]om

694 of]do no 700 the]suche 702 wurshipp]comfort 704 A faire
 body yformed to]And a fayre lady I must affyrme 710 that]well
 714 manerles]mercylesse 730 this]they 732 yow]them 733 no]nat
 song]loue 735 I]ye 747 what]whan so 759 porposyn]pursuen
 760 set]nat set noble]none yll 761 good]euery good 763
 ther]the 772 ben]lyue 777 visage]face 778 the]these
 779 endure]here endure 781 oo]a allone]nat one 782 not]
 nowe 785 pleyn me]complayne 788 he so sone]so soone am
 791 There]Nothing nothing]om 793 for]om 794 reioysed]
 recouered 799 it]to.

The persistence of the PTh variational group suggests that this is also genetic; it includes agreement in some 110 or more substantive variants, many of them trivial but some important.

I now give the variational groups of 3, 4, 5 and 6 manuscripts, so that any other possibly genetic groups can be discussed in the light of all the available evidence.

FHL

174 wyse]vice

FHC

66 speryd]sprad

FHT

251 thynketh]thynke ye 254 ground and cause]cause and ground
 278 naught]neuer 627 high]her

HTC88 yet]omHPTh

753 Is it]It is

LTC~~568~~⁵⁶⁸ agayn]certayn 677 the]youreLTTh

813 this]thus

LCS126 hym]om 310 grete desire]right gret loueLCTh825 ye]omLSP307 manere]manere ofLPTh

be]om (95) and]by 103 that]om 160 but]om 192 lytil]
 a litell 242 ayein]any 259 to forbarre]for to berre
 310 ryght]om 371 ryghtwysly]vnrightfully 492 And]om
 540 left]lost 540 as]and 570 no]om 588 yt haue]haue it

600 sorowe]sore 602 ryght]om 674 then]though 703 bere]
 haue 771 shal]suche 791 your]your owne 793 Ones]Thus

TCS

285 me hath]hathe me

TPTh

15 this]the 44 doth noon other]noon other doth 103 Were]
 There were 158 these]the 287 me hath]hath me 550 nylle]
 wyll 613 of]on 656 as]as a 678 lenger that]the lenger
 731 wele]wyll 747 pray]say 779 that]om 794 ye]your
 801 now]om

SPTTh

410 men]me 422 of]for 481 thus]this 591 at]which
 605 haueles]~~h~~armeles 632 for]in 678 thus]is

PThH²

47 neuer haue knowlych]neuer knowe 75 set]shette 191 Syth]
 Set 229 shulde]shulde it 273 not]om PTh underlined for
erasure H² 273 his]her 275 But]By 302 bettir were]better
 it were 329 Dulye]dayly 356 wonne]one 358 yow is]you
 thinke 394 be]om 531 it]I are]se 544 That]Than
 556 therto]therof 565 cases]causes 614 on]loue 622 Iuyse]
 iustyce 729 nyle]wyll 729 hate]hurt hert]selfe 744 to

bost]best 745 wille wel that]ywis yet 748 not]om PTh cancelled
H²

FHPTh

103 within]in 245 his]this 651 fole]folly

LTCS

545 harde]ful herd

LTPTh

351 this]thus 539 which]that

LCPTTh

27 the]this 33 with]by 766 Though]If 770 and(1)]the

LSPTh

362 or]and

LPThH²

281 beleue]loue 546 payne]a payne

TCPTTh

173 as]that 731 to]I

TSPTTh

599 al away]alwey 726 ouerschake]ouerslake 746 on]in

SPThH²

750 playn]all playne will]will I 368 abyde]to abide 308 neuer]

nother 618 neuer newe]newere 643 For]As for 643 all]an

FHLTS this]your 651 summer]better

226 at]om

It now appears that the presumably genetic variational group

FHLPTH is seriously questioned by other evidence. Of the

770 vertu]the vertu al groupings of these two manuscripts FC, ST,

331, HPTa, FHLTS and FHLPTH are each attested by only one

LTCPTH is a variant probably arising through coincidental variation;

65 with]by 486 your seson spend not al]spende not your season

al 797 al in]in al original readings, all trivial and probably

arising independently; FHL and LTC are each attested by one fairly

LTSPTh is a variant, but on its own this is insufficient evidence

285 this]thus 760 Wel]Wolle out genetic relationship.

It is unlikely that the Harley MS was copied from Fairfax 16.

LCSPTh stanza 28 is omitted in the Fairfax MS but included in

724 that]whiche the other hand it includes words wrongly omitted

in it, and gives the correct reading in some instances where it

LSPThH² alone with an unoriginal variant (for example, l. 7 the which]

750 yt]om the dyche]ay ay, 51, which correspondingly indicates

that Fairfax 16 cannot have been copied from Harley 372. Thus

TCSPTh manuscripts are probably closely related but independently

346 him]theym exclusive north ancestor.

If further evidence is added for a genetic group 2 in this is

LTCSPTh

111 man]oon 314 I wil]will I 368 abyde]to abide 508 neuer]
 nother 618 euere newe]euermore 643 For]As for 643 al]om
 649 this]youre 651 sunner]better

It now appears that the presumably genetic variational group FH is not seriously questioned by other evidence. Of the conflicting variational groupings of these two manuscripts FC, HT, HTC, HPTh, FHLTS and FHLPTH are each attested by only one substantive variant probably arising through coincidental variation; FT is attested by two trivial variants, FHPTh by three and FHT by four agreements in unoriginal readings, all trivial and probably arising independently; FHL and FHC are each attested by one fairly striking variant, but on its own this is insufficient evidence on which to base conclusions about genetic relationship.

It is unlikely that the Harley MS was copied from Fairfax 16, since stanza 28 is omitted in the Fairfax MS but included in Harley 372; on the other hand F includes words wrongly omitted in H, and gives the correct reading in some instances where H stands alone with an unoriginal variant (for example, l.7 the which] to whom H dysobey]sey nay H), which correspondingly indicates that Fairfax 16 cannot have been copied from Harley 372. Thus the two manuscripts are probably closely related but independently copied from an exclusive common ancestor.

If further evidence is needed for a genetic group PTh this is

to be found in the variational group PThH², where H² is the corrector of the Harley MS. All H² variation follows PTh, indicating that the corrector went through the text with one or other of the printed versions in front of him.

Among the other groups there is little firm evidence for genetic relationships: in the LC variational group two of the three instances of agreement in unoriginal readings are fairly important (74 Al my]My good 159 loue]om), but in themselves they are inconclusive. The groups LTh, LPTh and LPThH² perhaps indicate a closer relationship between L and PTh than between PTh and other MSS, but all the variant readings in these three groups could have arisen through coincident variation. In the group LCS one agreement (310 grete desire]right gret loue) seems to be significant, but again lacks supporting evidence. The SPTh variant reading haueles]harmeles (l. 605) is difficult, but even this could be coincidental in these three late texts, since haueles was obsolete except in Scottish and dialect use after 1450, and the obvious misreading is harmeles.

The exact relationship between LTCSPTh is indeterminable then, being obscured by discrepant groupings.

With these results it is impossible to use recension as a method of editing La Belle Dame sans Mercy, since the stemma is ultimately bifid and provides no casting vote between FH and the readings of the LTCSPTh line of descent. Useful though recension might be under ideal conditions, in the absence of all contamination

and coincidental variation these conditions seldom, if ever, obtain, and here the method is clearly ruled out.

This examination of the evidence has not been wasted, however, for it is now possible to use what genetic information has come to light along with the other evidence, such use not being the same as the application of recension.

4) An analysis of variation

Analysis of Variation

Although La Belle Dame sans Mercy is not of very great importance as literature, and until recently little interest had been shown in either the poem or its author, it is the

4) An analysis of variation

- ideal size for an experiment in textual criticism. It is of reasonable length; not too cumbersome, and has survived in a fair number of copies.

The ultimate aim of an edition is, of course, to go as far as possible towards restoring what the author wrote. Having collated the manuscripts and early printed texts of the poem and listed the large number of variant readings, the editor must then decide how best to make use of the information he has gathered. Several possibilities are open to him. The simplest is to print a parallel text edition, but in this case the poem does not warrant it, even if such a presentation be considered valuable.

A second possibility is to choose a 'best' manuscript, and retain the readings of that manuscript in all but the most obvious cases of error. There are objections to this in principle, for the act of choosing is already an act of editing, and difficulties in practice, however in this instance the choice is not clear.

The third way, and the one which I have tried to follow,

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The third way, and the one which I have tried to follow,

is to accept the editorial responsibility for determining originality: that is, to show that among the variants of a given passage, one is the original of the others, unless there is a clear indication of authorial revision.

The question now is whether the variation in the present case is of a kind to allow the third approach. At first sight the material might seem relatively trivial and unpromising, but the matter is only to be settled by an analysis of the variation, and the results of such an analysis are set out below.

My examination of all substantive variants was based on the general critical principle that "If the prior existence of one out of two or more various readings would naturally account for the genesis of the others, while the supposition of their prior existence would not account for it, that reading is most probably the true and original one".ⁱ By applying this principle, and at the same time taking into consideration the several conscious and unconscious ways in which a scribe is likely to depart from his exemplar, the following explanations of variation suggest themselves in the present case.

i. E. Moore, Contributions to the Textual Criticism of the Divina Commedia, Cambridge 1889, p. xxxv.

The most obvious source of variation is the scribe's misreading of his copy. One inducement is the similarity of

letter forms, and variants in this text showed that among the letters most likely to be confused are:

p and y

These two letters are scarcely distinguished by some fifteenth century scribes. See l. 148 I or] *y or] *per] ther FH; (see below for other examples of e/o confusion).

597 The]Ye C. 794 ye]the F. 813 Ye]The LTh. 838 thou]you L.

c and t

l. 110 Which]Wyth S. 503 such]sith S ^{possibly} (with additional confusion of the number of minims) 567 such]sith S 718 perce] *perte]parte T.

f and long s

540 left]lost LPT^h (see below for e/o confusion) 594 fyne] syn S. 651 fole]sole T.

p and y

47 pen]*yen]eyn FH 507 conseyte]concept L.

tt and ll

131 wit]*witt]wyll T.

b and h

259 behyght]he hyght F 474 he]be Th 690 by(2)]hygh T.

b and v

26 boldyd]voldyd T 341 awayte]*avayte]abayte FH (for other

examples of the interchange of w and v see ll. 174 wyse]vice FHL
and 452 lovely]lowly T).

t and e

158 daunce]daunct Th 158 aboute]*about]about Th.
408 that]*p^t] the S.

e and o

148 I or]ther FH (see above under p and y) 176 a frounter]
a frente L 485 se]so L 540 left]lost LPTh (see also above
under f and long s) 612 deth]doth F 616 ferre]for L
661 loveth]leuyth T 664 by leve]be loue L (from a form be leue
as found in the Cambridge Univ. MS Ff. 1. 6) 668 leveth]loueth T
673 se]so S 677 Leve]Loue T 744 bost]best PTh 748 beleuyd]
beloued L 760 Wel]Wolle L.

Confusion over the number of minims, or the combination
of letters which they are meant to represent, is another
frequent source of error. A few of the examples given may
be miswritings rather than misreadings, but it is not possible
to distinguish:

8 this]thus T 19 thus]this L 217 thus]thys T 285 this]
thus LTSPTh 347 into]vnto T 351 this]thus LTPTh 361 neuer]
men T 481 thus]this SPTh 503 such]sith S (see above under
c and t confusion) 542 ^{what}eu^{what}er]oon T (with confusion of e/o, u/n
and loss of -er suspension, see below) 551 custumable]custunable
S 567 ~~such~~ ⁶with S (see above under c and t confusion)

569 seyn]*seine]seme P 583 deserue]discerne PTh 601 Thus]
 This S 641 remewe]renew T 730 this]thus T 809 thus]this L
 813 this]thus LTTh.

Confusion over the use of marks of contraction and suspension
 may be divided under the following headings:

Loss of nasal suspension:

171 grauen]graue FHL 355 non]no P 410 men]me SPTh
 426 in]y S 491 then]the T 511 spend]spede L.

Loss of sign indicating vowel plus r:

98 morne]mone T (through loss of -ur- contraction) 202 sore]
 so P 361 neuer]men T 542 euer]oon T 551 manere]man PTh.

Not only did the scribe sometimes mistake letters which
 happened to be similar in form in the hand of his exemplar, but
 he also occasionally mistook one word for another which was
 similar to it in appearance. Both words might have several, or
 only a few, letters in common, and a general similarity in the
 position of ascenders and descenders either at the beginning, the
 end, or for the whole word. They might also contain some of those
 letters, discussed above, which were most likely to be confused.
 The following list gives some of the variants in this text which most
 probably arose from such a visual error, of which the scribe was
 quite unconscious at the time of writing:

60 lyth]*lieth]bethe L 105 ther]they, pei FH 186 withes]
 wrethes PTh 190 he thought tyme]*he tyme thought]he hym thought T

198 nere]more LTh 228 It]Yet PTh 238 haue]*haf]half L
 242 ayein]any LPTh 287 ychasyd]enbrasyd T 340 preven]present T
 352 Yet]It FH 385 fantise]fantasye F 386 These ben]Thus be PTh
 389 currisch]cursed PTh 389 a mouth]among T 393 semyng]menyng H
 394 but]not FH 416 Out]But T 433 hold]had T 436 deseruyngel
 desyring PTh 461 neuer formed]founded neuer PTh 476 foloweth]
 felyth S (472 it]yit F) 477 the print]theypresent T 512 leest]
 last L 513 feyled]feyned PTh 514 Or]On L 538 sewte]suerte FH
 567 entre]entent T 605 haueles]harmeles SPTh 623 gayneth]
 greueth S 651 fole]foule L 682 assoted]assured T 691 He]Ne C
 700 dedly]dewly T ✓ 719 stronge]straunger T (701 lyve]byn T)
 724 chasith]calleth T 726 ouerschake]ouerslake TSPTTh 733 song]
 loue PTh 750 erth]deth FH 756 renommed]renewyd T 759 porposyn]
 pursuen PTh 761 contynue]conceyue L (with c/t confusion and a
 misreading of the end of the word) 772 ben]lyue PTh (see ll. 60
 and 701 above) 774 punyssh]promyse T 791 yow]then T (showing
 a combined misreading of p for y, e for o, and n for u/w)
 814 awauntours]aventures FLTPTh. aventure H 825 folowe]foule LTh
 842 take]make F.

An interesting group of variants closely connected with this group consists of cases where the visual error is induced by some other element in the line. This is usually some word which is often used in a commonly current phrase; the scribe, with that phrase in mind, alters the text without realising he has done so. Here subconscious suggestion, as well as similarity of shape,

helps to produce an unoriginal reading. Some examples are:

29 an esy]on a grasy T (afterwards corrected, perhaps by T himself,
by altering grasy to easy) 42 fele]felde F; fynde T (the Fairfax
scribe seems to have had both words in mind, and accidentally
to have written down a combination of the two) 231 eschewyng]
escusyng FH¹ 445 cace]place]T 518 fairer]ferther T 585 seweth]
swereth PTh 617 oo degre]ordre C 656 still]fall T 657 myne]
mynd CS 659 none]anone H 679 of]for L 728 heel]lyfe T
783 pele]speke T 798 wepyng]heuy T 845 Like]Wilde FH.

Some variants seem to have arisen from a confusion of sounds,
rather than letters; and these may perhaps be called auditory,
as opposed to visual, errors. It is not unusual to 'hear' the
words one is trying to remember, even when they are not said
aloud, and we should not be surprised at the following indications
of an occasional lapse in the auditory memory. Examples are few,
since they are difficult to identify with certainty, but the
following seem sure:

386 man of]maner PTh 454 an[other]and other T 553 sorow his]
sorwe is H, sorowys T 599 body his]bodyes T 675 seurte]
shorte L.

A variety of mechanical errors can be detected among the
presumably unoriginal variants of this text. These are usually
caused by some distraction ~~upsetting the concentration~~ ^{disturbing the attention} of the

scribe. Such distraction may either be some circumstance in the text itself at the passage in question; or it may be some physical circumstance such as weariness, noise, or interruptions causing the writer to break off from his work, if only to look up, answer a question, or fetch a fresh supply of ink. Such errors are common, and their effect on the text is often slight and easily recognised; and yet the mistake may make an important difference to the sense of the passage. Numerous examples, both trivial and important in effect, illustrate the frequency of this kind of variation.

An obvious kind of mechanical error is metathesis. This may produce nonsense - a word which does not exist; or it may give rise to alternative forms of the same word, both of which have a wide currency, with the metathetical form occasionally surviving and becoming standard English; sometimes it results in a word which is per se correct, but quite wrong in the context. Examples are not given here of metathetical forms which were current in mediaeval usage, since these are orthographic rather than substantive variants. Some examples are:

66 speryd]*spred]sprad FHC 113 turment]trament L 175 garnison]
gramyson T 563 prison]preson C]person S 600 From]*Fro]For F
746 mystrusted]mystersted L

Another error, as familiar to writers to-day as it was common in the work of fifteenth century scribes, is the writing down of

a word or letter earlier in the line than it belongs, The word, letters or letter thus 'anticipated' may properly belong to the following word, or even the following line, as in line 79, where the Fairfax scribe, influenced by a similar construction in line 80, writes I instead of it. Other examples are:

84 gardeyn]gandeyn F 92 But]Bud C 115 euer]euery F 117 peyned] feynyd T 130 but]put S 134 And]As T 138 bode]stode C
 156 it]is F 184 doun]adowne L 204 hete]hert FH 222 To]Do T
 231 your]euery T 236 To]Do T 251 ye]yCC 252 this]your T 256
 defyde]deferryd T 258 same]saunce T 304 stroye]dystroy TPTh
 373 othir]suche other P 387 layth]lesyth T 419 Am]And FH
 433 non]to no T 496 Non]NerTT 527 Though]Thought L 557 it]
 that hit T 577 preve]prise PTh 608 at all]all all S 635 hem]
 & C 659 as]is FH 697 do]shew S 730 laugh they] or lawgh T.

Just as sometimes copy coming after the point reached causes the scribe to make a mistake in what he writes, so words or sounds are sometimes remembered from what has already been written, and involuntarily repeated later in the line. The following are examples of variant readings arising from attraction to a word or letter which had already been copied:

64 now]nygh T 97 grete]theyr T 126 noon]not FH 151 tendirly] wonderly PTh
 193 compace]space T 205 hert]hete T 213 peyned] feynyd
 224 non heede of yt]therof hede T 245 his]this FHPTTh
 278 naught]neuer FHT 310 desire]loue LCS 327 of]on H 329 moo]

me T 330 al]of FH 354 asked]axex L 399 your]hys TS 403 yf]
 of PTh 435 of]of all T 514 made]most S 542 my chaunce] my
 myschaunce S 568 agayn]certayn LTC 571 but]but a PTh 599 thought
 thoughty F 651 fole]foly FHPTh 652 The]To F 667 after]to haue S
 676 yt]I T 681 fayn]gayne L 682 founde]bounde T 702 wurshipp]
 comfort PTh 709 seyth]saith that L 730 this]they PTh 746 on]
 in TSPTH 809 one]and T

A closely related type of variant is that arising from a simple repetition of copy, of which only one distinct example is found in this text, at line 480: no moo]no nomo S.

Another mechanical error which can result in a variant reading is the wrong division, or occasionally the wrong joining together, of words. Some examples of a false division are:

315 manes]mannys TCS]man is L 330 wondres]wondre is L
 823 goddes]god is H 821 estate]astate TC]a state L.

Two cases of false joining occur:

190 a trace]attrace FLT 711 wrothe or]wrother T.

A few cases of simple aberration in which the scribe wrote nonsense, probably under the impression that he had copied exactly what was before him, are:

145 knewe]kewe L 352 greueth]grueth L 602 love]om T. 609 lady]
om T 836 humble]humbe F.

So far I have considered only alterations and additions to the text, but of course much of the variation consists in omission. Many omissions were caused by the recurrence of a similar sound, letter or word somewhere in the surrounding copy, and so are the result of mechanical error, as were earlier examples of attraction to following or preceding copy. In this case words or letters are omitted in one of two ways: either the scribe has the impression that he has already copied a particular group of letters; or, alternatively, where there are two words similar in shape, or having a letter in common, the scribe may omit the first of these words because his attention is attracted to the second, without his realising the difference. These are really two distinct kinds of omission, but since they depend on the same circumstances being present in the text, and their results are the same, I have not found it possible to distinguish between the two processes in the following examples:

3 not]om T 77 my]om PTh 88 yet]om FHTC 124 in(2)]om FH
 150 his]om L 159 loue]om LC 178 hir(2)] om L 188 me]om T
 219 vnhappy]happy T 235 right⁽²⁾]om T 280 your]om S 281 beleue]
 *leue]loue LPTh 293 This]The T 350 to]om L 363 certayn]om PTh
 367 yow]om S 372 On]om L 394 be]om PTh 400 sorowes]sorowe H
 415 hym(2)]om H 429 be(2)]om F 448 deth]om C 475 he]om C
 486 ye]om F 500 to]om T 502 that (2)] om PTh 506 in]om L
 521 both]om C 527 yt (2)]om T 531 fantasys[e]fantese LS
 587 grace]om L 595 necessarye]nessarye L 604 so]om F

608 at]om F 675 is]om S 700 of]om S 713 or]om S 729 others]
 oper C 748 no]oo L 750 yt]om LSPTh 763 hertes]om FH
 784 so]om T 789 no]om T 818 **C**astells]castell T 824 hath]
 om H 843 destitute]deceytute L.

Just as the repetition of letters, sounds or words within the line, or within a group of lines, can cause the omission of whole words or such trivial variation as the loss of a final s, so it can cause the loss of whole lines and groups of lines.

The omission of stanza 28 (lines 213-220) in the Fairfax manuscript shows how small a matter may cause the scribe to mistake his point of resumption after some interruption in his work. There is some similarity between the rhyming words of stanzas 27 and 28: stanza 27 has 'payn', 'constreyne', 'refreyne', 'certeyn'; stanza 28 contains 'peyned', 'constre~~ny~~d'. This circumstance, combined with the fact that the fourth line of both stanzas begins with the word 'When', was apparently enough to suggest to the scribe, at a quick glance, that he had already copied stanza 28.

Line 817, omitted in the Longleat manuscript and the Thynne text, rhymes with the previous line; the similar ending may have caused the scribe of Longleat 258 to believe that he had already copied this line. (Since the Thynne edition seems to be following the Longleat MS closely at this point, the omission is probably derivative, although of course it could have been made independently.)

The two cases of transposed lines may be discussed here, since they probably show omission which was noticed and rectified as soon as possible by the omitted line being copied in later. Here similar features which might have distracted the scribe may be noted. In lines 96 and 97, transposed in the Trinity College MS, the word 'gret' occurs in both lines, though admittedly not at a similar point in the line. It is surprising, however, how easily the mind and eye can be distracted in the process of writing and copying, and the scribe responsible for the Trinity text is notoriously careless.

In the Cambridge University MS lines 537 and 538 are transposed, as the scribe has indicated by using the letters b, a in the margin. Here again there are physical features in the text suggesting a possible source of error. Both lines 536 and 537 end in a two-letter word, of which the second letter is 'o'. This was evidently enough to cause the scribe, glancing at the ends of the lines, to believe that he had already copied line 537 and to go on with 538, only to realise his mistake and then copy in the omitted line.

This discussion of the causes of inadvertent omission leads now to a consideration of another kind of error: that probably produced by a lapse of memory through the scribe's taking up too much copy at a time. There is quite a large group of omissions where no palaeographic reason can be shown, but where the element omitted is grammatically dispensable. Usually the grammar of the statement functions quite adequately, despite the omission,

though such omissions affect the metre, even where they do not greatly affect the sense. Since a scribe is unlikely to have produced an unmetrical line deliberately, variation which destroys metre is probably, other considerations apart, unconscious.

The following list gives examples of the omission of those expendable parts of the sentence which are most easily forgotten, including part or all of the relative pronoun where it is not strictly necessary; the resumptive subject or object pronoun; a repeated expression of the negative, etc.

7 the]om Th 17 gret]om H 34 The]om T 138 al the]om T
 144 the]om PTh 155 for]om T 195 and]om PTh 262 hath]om PTh
 277 no]om T 282 gret]om FHPTTh 284 no]om S 288 I]om T
 295 yt]om T 317 that]om FH 318 al]om FH 366 as]om PTh
 411 not]om T 412 I]om C 446 it]om FH 456 al]om PTh 474 not]
 om T 492 And]om LPTh 529 not]om FH 532 to]om S 539 And]
 om L 542 may]om PTh 543 that]om S 570 no]om LPTh 586 in]
 om T 602 ryght]om LPTh 622 no]om LT 625 euer]om T 632 long]
 om S 644 that]om PTh 684 That]om PTh 717 yit]om T 748 not]
 om PTh 779 that]om TPTh 801 now]om TPTh 809 thus]om F
 824 Line om LTh (Here the words omitted are a complete grammatical
 unit in the form of an aside, line 825 following on from line 823
 without a noticeable break. The rhyming words 'grace' and
 'trace' probably also influenced the scribe and caused him to
 skip over one line.) 825 ye]om LCTH 833 al]om FH.

Another source of imperfect retention of copy sometimes

involving omission, is the tendency of the scribe to form constructions verbally or grammatically parallel. Where this happens the result is that the variant construction is made closer in form to a phrase earlier in the line, or in a previous line. Some examples are:

160 but]om LPTh 368 eke]om S 537 he]om S.

This tendency towards parallelism is not confined to variants involving omission only. Many substantive variants which seemed at first to be attributable to the surrounding copy also result in the formation of parallel constructions. The formation of parallels is probably still quite unconscious, since it is natural and easy, where memory of the copy is not precise, to repeat an earlier construction. However, it is just possible that there was some deliberate preference for a parallel construction on grounds of style, or because it is grammatically an easier construction. In the following instances it is not possible to distinguish confidently between conscious and unconscious variation:

224 non heede of yt]therof hede T 278 naught]neuer FHT
 358 is]thinke PTh 422 of]for SPTh 444 not]neuer PTh 495 It]
 I FH 667 after]to haue S 695 yt]ther S 700 the]suche PTh
 711 Ought]Shuld T 730 this]they PTh 770 and (1)]the LCPTH
 770 eke]eke the FHLPTH 771 shal]suche LPTh 844 and]and of H.

The consideration that variation towards parallelism may not always be unconscious, brings us now to an examination of

those motives which sometimes led a scribe purposely to alter the wording of the poem or other text which he was copying. Before leaving the discussion of unconscious variation altogether, though, three kinds of variant which are difficult, if not impossible to analyse, and which must be viewed as borderline cases, should be mentioned.

The first of these is the apparently pointless alteration of word order. This may largely be the result of error of memory, where the scribe remembers the sense of what he is copying, and even retains all the words, but does not keep them in the same order. As with grammatical parallelism, this sometimes produces an easier reading; the tendency being to write the words in an order nearer to that of straightforward prose. Not all such variants can seriously be considered as attempts to make the text easier, however. Plenty of examples will be found in the footnotes, but the case is too obvious to need illustration here.

The second and third of these borderline cases are two kinds of substitution which seem to stem from nothing but the scribe's own habits of speech. One of these is the substitution of a different spelling which, because it contains more or fewer syllables than the poet's spelling, affects the metre. In a few cases this may be a deliberate attempt at improvement, but generally speaking it is probably only an unconscious preference for a more familiar or habitual form. The other consists in variations which are small alterations involving grammatical and di

dialect forms, and words which are exactly synonymous. Examples will be easily recognised in the footnotes.

From errors of which the scribe was, for the most part, unaware, we come now to a consideration of those variants which were nearly always deliberately introduced. The first group concerns variation connected with the scribe's comprehension of his text, and here both deliberate and unconscious variation are to be found. It has long been recognised that scribes were quick to find their text difficult, and to alter it accordingly. Edward Moore wrote:

"Nothing has struck me more in working at these MSS than the extraordinary short-sightedness of the copyists in respect of a construction. Their vision seems often to be bounded by a single line, for I have found numerous instances in which alterations have been made apparently to make a complete construction for the single line in which they occur, without regard to what follows..."ⁱ

i. E. Moore, op. cit. p. xvi.

Among the instances in this text of variation arising from misunderstanding one type calls for special mention. These are misreadings due to confusion of spelling: where the same spelling can represent two words quite distinct in meaning the scribe, by altering that spelling, shows that he has chosen the wrong alternative. Some examples can be seen in lines 227, 340, 356, 576, 585, 735, 757 and 760.

Variants generally recording misunderstanding of copy are:

72 no⁺]but T (where an attempt at explicitness shows misunderstanding) 227 swe]shew T 282 gret plesaunce]disple^usaunce PTh
 340s~~se~~we]^sue F 356 wonne]one PTh (though this might equally well be an auditory error) 371 ryghtwysly]vnrightfully LPTh
 450 a curteyse manere]curteysy manere FH 533 folily]not folely L
 no foly PTh 546 trewe]trewly L 566 That]Which FH 585 seweth]
 shewith S 592 lovely]lothely T 652 desesperaunce]esperaunce T
 707 al]not C 760 Wel]Wolle LTSPTh (see also under palaeographic confusion of e/o) 794 ye]your TPTh.

Another kind of deliberate variation seems designed to remove as far as possible the effect on metre, style and meaning of an earlier mistake, made either by the same scribe or in some earlier copy. That a scribe wished to make his copy as correct as possible is shown at lines 96 and 537, where an omitted line is copied in as soon as the mistake is noticed. Again in line 3, rose]arose T, the longer form of the word is used to supply a syllable lost when the word not was omitted. The scribe may not necessarily have realised what had gone wrong, but may simply have felt the need to make the line read more smoothly. Other examples of this general type are:

34 hath]hath fro me T 73 my]al my LC 74 Al^{my}]My good LC
 (where the scribe is working in a word omitted in the previous line) 80 abyde]bide H 224 kyns]maner T 237 not]hit not T

544 deth]om L 544 no]not noo L 597 he]ye TC 643 al]om LTCSPTh
 678 that]om TPTh 684 ther]your C 717 hard]hardyr T 750 not]
 not all SPTh 791 your]your owne LPTh 801 forth]forthe and T

Closely connected with these attempts to set right mistakes which might confuse the meaning or spoil the metre of the poem are variants intended to make the text more easily intelligible whenever it may have seemed to be in any way obscure. Sometimes very small points seem to the scribe to need interpreting, and often he finds difficult in their limited context words whose meaning is obvious when the passage is read as a whole. No doubt, as we have already seen (~~see~~ above p.162), this is the result of his method of working, of taking up small groups of words at a time and transcribing them, rather than seeing the passage as a whole. The scribe often found metaphors and other imaginative uses of language difficult; similarly words or sentiments which one would not normally expect in a particul^r context gave him some trouble. Word order may sometimes deliberately have been altered to give an easier reading, but change in word order was probably more often due to a faulty memory (see above, p.161). Some examples of scribal attempts to act as interpreter between poet and audience are:

65 the forser hath]hath the forser FT 140 ryght a]a right L
 145 shote]seght FH 146 fedred]fearfull PTh 164 drede]louyd T
 170 their eyn]suche oon T 172 he]she C 182 sore the hert] the
 herte sore C 209 fefreyne]restreyne T 703 bere]haue LPTh
 705 dyffame]fame L 821 or]of T.

A special type of variation connected with comprehension of the text is that found in the Pynson and Thynne version: it is possible that the variation here is the product of editing, carried out for purposes of modernization and clarification, before the type was set up. Although there are doubtless many unconscious errors in these two texts, which probably arose in exactly the same way as they did in the manuscript copies, the amount of deliberate variation is probably greater; there is more time when setting up type to make deliberate changes, perhaps even following a pre-arranged plan. With this possibility in mind I give the Pynson and Thynne variants separately, as being of special interest. For instance, examples of editorial 'smoothing' to counteract an earlier error, either in the exemplar or the present copy, are:

159 louer]man he PTh (this reads very much like an improvisation for a lost word: louer is missing from the Longleat and Cambridge University MSS for palaeographic reasons (see above, p. 156) and may well have been missing from the manuscript used by the printers)
 275 But]By PTh (see omission of not in line 273) 404 Then]That PTh
 662 In love he]That in love PTh 779 endure]here endure PTh 785 me]
om PTh.

In these two texts there are also instances of attempts to correct the original reading, as opposed to simply counteracting one's own or other copyists' errors:

531 it are]I se~~f~~ be PTh (an attempt to sort out the singular/plural confusion of these lines ?) 688 felt]fele PTh (tense smoothing) 691 semyth]semed PTh (perhaps a mistaken attempt to make the tenses of this passage agree).

Easier readings in the Pynson and Thynne texts are:

60 vndir hir]within this PTh 146 fedred]fearfull PTh
 188 myght no man]no man might PTh 193 a certeyn of]of a certayne
 PTh 273 not]om-PTh 310 Nor grete desire nor ryght grete affiaunce]
 Nor haue therein no great affyaunce PTh 729 hate myn hert]hurt
 myselfe PTh.

A few of the changes in the Pynson and Thynne texts may be classed as chronological variation. Examples are:

43 I]as I PTh (an attempt to correct the metre of the line where the changed stress of the word fortune has disrupted it)
 46 Were constrenyd]Constrayned were PTh (shifting stress on the word constrayned) 234 to]unto PTh (shifting stress on the word seruise has altered the rhythm of the line).

A specific form of variation towards an easier text is the tendency to make a reading more explicit. Variation which makes the text more explicit often takes the form of an addition, or the substitution of a general in place of a particular term. The frequency of variation towards a more explicit text is indicated by the number of examples:

39 I surely]yet therwith T 45 so]so that T 103 Were]There
 were TPTTh 116 Ful]At H 120 but]but for T 132 no thing]then
 nat T 136 othir]betryr T 169 set]wyll set T 174 O wyse nor
 othir]In any wyse nether T 179 Wel]Went T 192 lytil]a litell LPTTh
 195 ther]there as LT 229 shulde]shulde it PTh 246 yafe]yaf hym C
 263 for]for þe H 265 to]ye may PTh 289 is]hit ys T 289 ordeyne]
 so ordeyne T 302 were]it were PTh 358 yow]to yow T 406 while]
 while that S 476 the]thayr S 517 do]to doo L 614 on]loue PTh
 621 oone]that oon L 644 the]my T 656 stone]a stone TPTTh
 660 the]this S 664 byleve]beleue ye PTh 673 the]that T 675 the]
 my PTh 742 he]that he S 774 to]to doo L.

The scribal tendency to introduce variants which give an
 easier reading than that of the original shows a desire to
 communicate with the audience. The scribe, participating in the
 function of the poet, feels the need to make his meaning as clear
 as possible: not only this, he also tries to express it with as
 much emphasis as possible. There is a large group of variants
 in which extra words are ^{added} ~~used~~ for the sake of emphasis, stronger
 expressions are introduced, and further expressions of the negative
 added which are superfluous; occasionally the order of words is
 altered in order to throw a key word into greater significance.
 Such variants often occur where the meaning of the original is
 already plain:

6 more]any more L 101 ryght]full T 126 as after]for/soth to T
 144 most]euer T 151 tendirly]wonderly PTh 161 after]euer T

164 he most drede]moost he dred L 186 ybounden]ybounde full T
 221 hote]sore T 293 ryght]full T 297 now]lew T 377 laugh]
 dysplesyn T 384 the⁽²⁾ne the T 391 ryght]ful H 462 creature]
 o creature H 474 shulde]ne schuld S 477 Your eeyn]Youre owne
 eyen L 540 as]all T 545 hard]ful herd LTCS 608 thyng]othing L
 649 wel]ryght well S 710 that]well PTh 773 do]doo no L 814 Such]
 All T.

Apart from showing interest in the force of expression of what they were writing, scribes were sometimes moved to attempt improvements of style. It is difficult now to say with certainty that this was the motive for substitution in a given case, but the following instances seem sure enough to indicate that the tendency existed:

235 right⁽²⁾even FH (avoids repetition) 249 your²thought is]
 ye do ful FH (avoids using thought after thinketh earlier in the line).

Such parallelism as was consciously introduced in to the text would also come under the head of stylistic variation, but it was not possible to distinguish this from unconscious error (see above, p 160).

Lastly, scribes also felt responsible to a certain extent, not only for the presentation but for the moral content of what they wrote, if we are to judge from this apparent censorship or bowdlerizing of the text:

60 with hir]here PTh 73 good]om HLTCPTH 704 A faire body
yformed to]And a fayre lady I must affyrme PTh.

5) Editorial Methods

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The results of the previous section, which are considerable having regard to the unimportance and relative easiness of the work, show that it is possible for the editor to go much further in analysing variation than might previously have been thought, and that even the most unpromising variants respond to such analysis. Thus, on the basis of this information, a much more radical process of editing than might at first have seemed possible can be carried out, and with considerable confidence. In the first instance it was often possible to decide from the context, the nature of the variants, or comparison with the Old French version, which of several readings was the original. In the second place, where these aids failed it was possible to apply the knowledge gained from this analysis about the ways in which a scribe might alter his copy, consciously or unconsciously. If any of the variants then seemed to make the text more explicit or more emphatic, to replace a difficult reading by an easy one, or to be attributable to any of the causes of mechanical error, this could then be taken as a good indication of the direction of variation.¹

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Kane, in his recent edition of the A. Text of Piers Plowman, London 1959.

The equipment of the editor is thus substantially increased. He is not obliged to rely, as many earlier editors apparently were, on the authority of one manuscript, chosen for its antiquity or supposed position in the genealogical tree, or to place his faith in numerical support for a reading.ⁱ Instead he will apply all that he knows about the processes of copying mediaeval texts in a systematic attempt to restore the original reading.

- i. See W.W. Greg, The Calculus of Variants, Oxford 1927, p. 20 note 1: "... as a rule, the easier it is to explain how an error arose, the less valid the assumption that it only arose once."
-

The one important qualification that all editors must make is that in the task of establishing a text no method is infallible. No scientific system for determining originality can be devised, since any act of editing involves a personal judgement, and even Sir Walter Greg, in his Calculus of Variantsⁱⁱ makes no claim to have eliminated this element of personal choice.

- ii. W.W. Greg, The Calculus of Variants, An Essay on Textual Criticism, Oxford 1927, p. 47. See also the warning given

by R.B. McKerrow, Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford 1939, p. vii: "Nothing can be gained, and much may be lost, by a pretence of deriving results of scientific accuracy from data which are admittedly uncertain and incomplete."

Bearing this qualification in mind the method is certainly serviceable, as a few examples will show. First I give some instances in which the Old French textⁱ helps to establish the Middle English reading, since the tendency of variation in these cases confirms and supports the analysis set out above.

- i. Quotations are from Arthur Piaget's edition of Alain Chartier's La Belle Dame sans Mercy et les poésies lyriques, 2nd. ed., Lille and Geneva 1949. Amédée Pagès has also edited the French poem from different manuscripts, in Romania LXII, Paris 1936, pp. 481-531. Any study of the English poem is limited by the lack of a ^{satisfactory} ~~scholarly~~ edition of the French text, and if such a critical text of the French poem were ever printed my results would have to be re-examined, although I ^{would} ~~do~~ not expect my text to be seriously affected.
-

In line 47 ^{My}pen] ThCPThH²; ^{Myn}eyn FH¹, the reading ^{My}pen is supported by the Old French version Ma plume (l. 19). The reading

^{Myn}*yen/eyn is the result of palaeographic confusion of p and y, suggested perhaps by the opening words of l. 50 'Myn eyn'.

In line 73 the reading my good maistres is adopted in spite of the omission of good in six out of the seven witnesses available at this point on the indication of the Old French la tresbonne. In addition what we have seen of a scribe's inclination to censor his text suggests that good was purposely omitted, apparently because the connotations of the word mistress at this time were such as to suggest that the adjective good was out of place.ⁱ

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- i. The earliest example in the OED for the meaning intended here is under Mistress sb. I. 10, "A woman who has command over a man's heart", Hawes' Past. Pleasure 18 (Percy Soc.) 83: "You are my lady, you are my masteres, whome I shall serve with all my gentylnesse". Ros's usage may well have been influenced by the French. (But see also Chaucer, Troilus and Criseida II. 2. 98 "Uncle," quod she, "your maistresse is nat here."')
-

In the following line, 74, Al my welefare gives an exact translation of the Old French Tout mon bien fait. The scribes of the Longleat and Cambridge MSS apparently satisfied their feelings both for propriety and for faithfulness to the copy text by transposing the good of l. 73 and al of l. 74, giving the tautologous phrase 'My good welfare' in l. 74 and the more emphatic 'was al my' in l. 73.

In line 111 man]oon LTCSPTh the Old French homme settles the question. The use of man without an article reads a little oddly,ⁱⁱ and the manuscript support for oon is impressive; nevertheless,

ii Instances in the OED of the use of man without the article usually employ the word in a special sense as, for example, to indicate the human race. Perhaps the nearest parallel given is Man sb. I. 1. c. 1382 Wyclif, John vii. 46 "Neuere man spak so, as this spech is."

the Old French text decides in favour of man, especially since oon may well be a simple repetition of one from l. 109. Alternatively, one in l. 109 may have suggested to the scribe a way of getting round the slight awkwardness of the original reading.

In lines 145 and 146 the metaphor presented difficulties to some scribes: in line 145 Fairfax and Harley read seght/sight for shote; in line 146 Pynson and Thynne read fearfull for fedred. The Old French reads:

"J'apperceu le trait de ses yeulx

Tout empenné d'humbles requestes"

which establishes the text beyond all question and is a further indication of the scribal tendency to make difficult readings easier, in this case by replacing a metaphor by a literal statement.

The following are further examples of cases where the text is established by the Old French. The motives for variation are usually obvious; the strenght of these impulses is indicated where the demonstrably unoriginal variant is to be found in a majority of manuscripts. (Numerical support is not always reliable evidence, since manuscripts may be related, and genetic evidence is valuable here.) In some cases, for example in lines 494 and 495, the Old French text settles a question which would have been hard to decide on grounds of sense and scribal tendencies alone because of the balance of evidence. Here an editor is indeed lucky to have this resource to fall back on.

204 hete]hert FH, OFr. gui art; 249 your^{grete foly} thought is^{grete foly} ye do
 ful^{grete foly} FH, your hert ys^{grete foly} T, OFr. ce fol pensement; 310 grete
 desire]right gret loue LCS, haue therin PTh, nor]no PTh,
 ryght]om LPTTh, OFr Ne grant espoir ne grant desir; 324 rechace]
 rychesse FHSPTh, OFr les rachas; 494 your]his LCSPTh, om.T,
 OFr vous; 495 It]LTCSPTh, I FH, OFr Il (used impersonally);
 583 deserue]discerne PTh, OFr deservir; 614 on]loue PTh²,
 OFr on; 618 euere newe]euermore LTCSPTh, OFr de rechief;
 629 gret]om FH¹, OFr grant; 627 high]LCS, her FHT, his PTh,
 OFr hault; 651 sunner]better LTCSPTh, OFr Plus tost;
 714 manerles]mercyless PTh, OFr sans maniere; 750 erth#]
 deth FH¹, OFr La terre; 814 ~~awa~~untours]C, adventures FLTPTh,
 auenture H, OFr vanteurs.

As in any translation, and particularly one in verse, the wording of Sir Richard's version sometimes moves away from a literal reproduction of the original, and is not always close enough to the French to allow this sort of comparison. Where comparison has been possible, however, it has been of the greatest value both in confirming individual readings and attesting the validity of the propositions on which much of this work is based.

Metrical considerations also sometimes help, other things being equal, to establish the reading of the original. ^{The metre of the poem is a five-stress rising rhythm.} In line 17^{the}/Harley^{scribe's} omission of gret gives an unmetrical line, and is therefore presumably unoriginal. In the same line the FHLC spelling symplesse robs the line of a metrically necessary and

therefore presumably original syllable, as provided in the TPTH spelling symplenesse. In line 155 TLCPTH read most, while FH omit it; the decision is difficult, since while FH have a known tendency to omit words, some of the MSS of the LTCPTH group are equally notorious for introducing more emphatic readings into the text. But since the poet presumably wrote metrical verse, most is accepted as original on metrical grounds. In line 170 the alternative form withouten PLVTH is adopted for a similar reason. Further examples are:

174 apert]C; pert FHLTPTh 188 thoroughout]HLC; thorghout
 FTPTh 282 gret plesaunce]TLCS; plesaunce FH (disple^usaunce PTh);
 337 that]LTCSPTh; om FH 401 whether]LTCSPTh; wher FH
 440 no]TCSPTh; om FH 446 it]CTSPTh; om FH 508 study]
 TLCS; to study FHPTh 544 not]HTC; om FLSPTh, cancelled H²
 619 gret sotillte]LTCSPTh; subtilyte FH ⁱ 661 loveth]HLCS;
 love FPTh; leuyth T 740 enemy]LHTCSPTh; enmy F 770 vertu]
 TC; the vertu FHLPTH 803 shorter]LTCPTH; short FH.

i. The suggestion that the spelling of the basic text subtilyte might represent a four-syllable form of the word is not authorised by OED. The line without gret (which might otherwise be rejected as a more emphatic variation) is therefore probably unmetrical, and gret probably original.

In a text of this kind the variant readings are likely to be trivial, and in many cases the choice between them is simple: there

are no spectacular demonstrations of the usefulness of my method of deciding between variants. Rather it is the successful application of the method in a great number of minor instances which gives a growing sense of its utility. Moreover the fact that variation is trivial does not remove the need for a decision between variants; it is very often in those cases where there seems to be little to choose between alternative readings that the editor most needs help. In the sum of such cases the systematic application of what is known about scribal tendencies is of great value. As an illustration of the method at work I propose to set out the more complicated cases, as being of greater interest.

26 boldyd]voldyd T; boldly PTh. Here the originality of boldyd is indicated by its being the reading most likely to have given rise to the other two. In terms of that likelihood voldyd is the result of a palaeographic error on the part of T, involving the confusion of two letters (b and v) liable to such confusion because of their similarity in some mediaeval scripts; boldly is the result of the scribal (and compositorial) tendency to make a text easier by bringing it up to date.

46 Were constrenyd]Constrayned were PTh. Here the variant reading illustrates the same modernizing tendency. There is a temptation for the editor to adopt the PTh reading, in the interests of rhythm, until he realises that it is the result of the PTh

compositors adapting the word order to suit the requirements of changing stress.

55 balade]baladys TPTH. At first sight the TPTH reading seems the more likely original, but it is much more probable that TPTH are here following a scribal tendency to create parallel constructions, consciously or unconsciously, than that all other scribes should have inadvertently omitted the final s thus breaking a parallel construction.

77 thought]LTCPTH; thoughtes FH. The rejected variant at first seemed preferable: this earl^eir in the line could be a plural form, and the loss of final s in the other manuscripts could have been explained as a simple mechanical error caused by the initial s of the following word, sore. But between thought and thoughtes the singular seems a slightly more difficult expression, because of its further senses of pensiveness or meditation. On this consideration the plural was taken to be the result of the scribal tendency to substitute an easier expression, and therefore to be unoriginal.

226 at]CPTh; om FHLTS. On purely metrical grounds the line was more satisfactory without at. But on the other hand the OED gives no example of the phrase to set at nought with ellipsis of at. A third consideration was decisive: the very great probability of the scribe's omitting one of a series of five consecutive words ending in t, two of which were so alike as at

and it.

278 naught]LCPTh; not S; neuer FHT. The FHT reading was rejected on the grounds that neuer, as producing a parallel construction, was the more probably scribal reading. This decision was strengthened by the greater emphasis of neuer, which again, in that respect, corresponded to a scribal tendency of variation.

358 yow is]to yow ys T; thought is L; you thinke PThH². Of these four variants the Trinity MS gives a metrically awkward and more explicit reading; the PTh version, and the Harley correction, create a construction parallel with the second half of the line, and the Longleat reading seems to be the result of a combination of visual error palaeographically induced, and error due to the suggestion of the surrounding copy. The remaining variant yow is, as the harder reading and the one most likely to have given rise to the others, is thus the likeliest original.

462 creature]o creature H. Both versions can be read so as to make the line reasonably rhythmical, since heven can be a monosyllable or dissyllable. But as the Harley reading introduces greater emphasis into the line and makes explicit the contrast with noon of the preceding line, it was rejected as being most probably scribal.

540 left as dede]left as dethe F; lost and dede LPTh; left all

deede T. This is a mistranslation of the OFr text as given in the two printed editions available:

"Et tout le bien qu'il en requeut

C'est de mourir en la poursuite".

The left/lost confusion is palaeographic, arising from the similarity of certain forms of f and s, e and o. I have taken left as being the original because it is attested by manuscripts belonging to both halves of the genetic stemma, whereas lost is only found in LPTh, all thought to be in some fairly close genetic relationship. Of the three variants as/ and/ all, the latter is taken to be a more emphatic reading introduced by T, and is a smoothing introduced to cover the substitution of lost for left, which leaves an original as. The F reading dethe is probably a scribal attempt to interpret a passage where the sense is not at all clear.

545 harde]ful herd LTCS. Both versions were possible metrically, depending on the number of syllables allowed to the word sufferaunce. But since the introduction of ful by LTCS seemed designed to produce greater emphasis, ful was rejected as the more probably scribal reading.

559 deuour]LTCS; dewtis FH; honour PTh. The meaning of honour is less suitable in the context than that of deuour or dewtis, but there is little to choose between the latter, since both words were apparently in current use during the fifteenth century. But between deuour and dewtis the former is more likely

to have been the original of the rest, because it could give rise to dewtis by substitution of a synonym, and to honour by visual error. Originality is therefore presumed to lie with deuour.

750 yt is not playn] is not all playne SPThH²; is playne L.
This line is a somewhat garbled version of the OFr as printed by Piaget:

"La terre n'est pas toute unie".

In spite of the evidence of toute I have taken all to be unoriginal; yt as a resumptive subject pronoun was very likely to be omitted, and all is then introduced to smooth the metre of the line, and at the same time gives a more emphatic reading. The lateness of the witnesses for all, and their suspected genetic relationship, rob them of much authority in the matter. The L reading is an attempt to make better sense of a difficult passage.

There were inevitably a number of instances where the evidence is conflicting, and alternative variants seem to be supported by considerations of equal weight.

The variants of line 60 are a case in question: in grave] I graue LTCPh. The phrase vndir hir tumbe in grave translates the Old French soubz la lame, lame being a thin strip of metal such as might be engraved and placed as a cover for a grave.ⁱ

i. See Emile Littré, Dictionnaire de la Langue Française, Paris and London 1873, 4 v. lame, s.f.1

If we accept the reading in grave, then grave must be a substantive with the definite article omitted, as used also in, for example, Robert of Brunne's Chronicle, c. 1310, 290: "To that stede he ferd, þer he was laid in grave" (OED). The word tomb can mean a monument enclosing or covering the graveⁱ; grave is therefore not necessarily an exact repetition of tumbe. If in grave is accepted as being the original reading, then Igrave arises through loss of the nasal suspension, which we have seen to be quite a common source of error.

-
- grave sb. 1 "A place of burial..."
- i. See OED / c. 1400-1450 Alexander 4451 "Graffis garnyscht of gold & gilten tombis".
-

But on the other hand it is equally possible to treat Igrave as the original reading, taking it to be the past participle of grave, the verb, meaning 'to bury'; in that case the half-line means 'buried under her tomb' which, as the example in note i above shows, would be a possible use of the word tomb. It is perhaps less easy to see how Igrave could give rise to the variant in grave than the reverse. We should have to assume that a particularly heavy flourish over the i, intended as a dot, was misread as a sign of nasal suspension. This is of course quite possible, particularly with the work of such a scribe as S, who sometimes produces a most elaborate flourish by way of dotting his i, but on the whole this seems harder to assume than the loss of n suspension. Thus the evidence is fairly evenly balanced, though

perhaps slightly in favour of the reading of the basic text, which I have accordingly retained.

118 outward]H; outward F; outwardys T; outwardly LCSPT^h. At first sight outwardly seems preferable, being metrically easier and smoother. The loss of -ly from an original outwardly could be attributed to the scribe's carelessness and to the attraction of a similar sound in the following he. Although the earliest OED example of outwardly, Adv. 2, meaning "in outward appearance as opposed to inner reality" is dated 1509, the form was very probably in use during the latter half of the fifteenth century, while it is possible that some scribes substituted outward for an original outwardly as being a neologism and therefore difficult. But if we assume an original outward (and the OED gives examples of outward, adv. 3b, with the meaning quoted above, from as early as c. 1386 continuing until 1673), then the F reading is merely an unmetrical, two-syllabled variation of the same form, and the T reading outwardys likewise supports it, while the LCSPT^h reading outwardly is to be attributed to metrical smoothing and the substitution, probably quite unconscious, of a more modern form.

Although it seldom happens that there is not some balance of probability in favour of one variant rather than another, there are some cases in which it is very slight. The completeness of the evidence provided in footnotes to the text will enable the reader to test editorial decisions for himself at any point.

Presentation of the Text

In choosing a copy-text to form the basis of this edition, I looked for a manuscript which would present the poem in its authentic Middle English form, with reasonable consistency of orthography and inflexion. The manuscript eventually chosen, Bodleian MS Fairfax 16, is the earliest extant version, probably written not many years after the composition of the poem and certainly within the poet's lifetime. The form of the language, in incidental detail, should be fairly close to that of the author, and in any case represents what was being spoken and written somewhere in England in the thirteenth century. To give the poem an authentic form, or to use a phrase, to follow the Fairfax manuscript in all matters where no variation is not involved, except where the original order is disarranged as a result of the displacement of some lines or an archetype. I did not consider the displacement of lines as a disqualification of the Fairfax manuscript because the order of the disarrangement is self-evident, and the original order is accounted for, and the correct order is determinable from the external evidence of the French text. These errors have been put into their ^{correct} proper order, and the one stanza missing from the Fairfax manuscript, stanza 30, has been restored from the

Presentation of the Text

In choosing a copy-text to form the basis of this edition, I looked for a manuscript which would present the poem in an authentic ^{late} Middle English form, with reasonable consistency of orthography and inflexion. The manuscript eventually chosen, Bodleian MS Fairfax 16, is the earliest extant version, probably written not many years after the composition of the poem and certainly within the poet's life-time. This being so the language, in incidentals at least, should be fairly close to that of the author, and in any case represents what was being spoken and written somewhere in England in his time. In order to give the poem as authentic a form as is now possible, I have followed the Fairfax manuscript in all matters where substantive variation is not involved, except where the order of stanzas is disarranged as a result of the displacement of some leaves in an archetype. I did not consider this displacement a serious disqualification of the Fairfax manuscript because the fact of the disarrangement is self-evident, mechanical and easily accounted for, and the correct order is determinable from the external evidence of the French text. These stanzas have been put into their ^{correct} ~~proper~~ order, and the one stanza missing from the Fairfax manuscript, stanza 28, has been restored from the

other manuscripts in a form which is as close as possible in spelling to that of the Fairfax manuscript.

It should perhaps be mentioned that the copy-text has no more authority as regards substantive variation than any other manuscript, on the principle enunciated by the late Sir Walter Greg that "the choice between substantive readings belongs to the general theory of textual criticism, and lies altogether beyond the narrow principle of ^{the} copy-text."ⁱ

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- i. Sir W.W. Greg, "The Rationale of Copy-Text" in Studies in Bibliography, Papers of the Bibliographical Society of the
University of Virginia, Vol. III, ^{Charlottesville} 1950-1, p.26.
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An account of my practices in transcription and presentation of material must now be given. The initial letter of each line is printed as a capital: the Fairfax scribe begins many lines with a capital letter, and his practice is thus made uniform. Capitals within the line have been reproduced whenever they occur, which is seldom in the Fairfax manuscript. Letters which are something like a capital in form, but are obviously not meant to be distinguished, such as the r of the Longleat scribe, are given as lower case letters.

Suspensions and contractions are expanded to the letters they normally represent; where they might stand for more than one spelling the scribe's practice in uncontracted forms is followed. All the letters produced by such expansions are

italicised. Some signs which resemble the nasal bar or the -es flourish at the end of a word are disregarded where they seem to have no orthographical value; in any event, by this date they are probably often little more than formal.

Superior letters which do not represent contractions are written in a normal position, without any distinguishing mark: but where contraction is also involved the supplied letters are italicised (for example p^e is transcribed pe, but p^t is written pat, w^t becomes with etc.).

All foreign words are italicised.

The question of word division is a difficult one. It is not possible to keep to the Fairfax scribe's joining and division of words, which is highly inconsistent, and an attempt to devise some thoroughly consistent policy, which could be applied in every instance, was defeated by the number of exceptions and special cases which have to be considered. Hence the division of words is arbitrary, and no record is given in the footnotes where my division or joining differs from that of the basic text, manuscript practice being too haphazard to warrant this.ⁱ

i. With the exception of l. 190 a trace]HCSPTh attrace FLT where F has doubled an initial consonant in joining two words together, and , of course, instances where a difference in meaning is involved.

The following general rules have been followed as closely as possible: prepositions and adverbs composed of two or more elements in Old or early Middle English, which by the fifteenth century seem to have acquired a special meaning in combination, which is not the same as that of the component parts when written separately, are written as one word; compounds of -self are written as one word. I have repeatedly looked to fifteenth century practice, as far as such a thing existed and can be discovered from the evidence available in the Oxford English Dictionary and the published parts of the new Middle English Dictionary.¹ Where words seem to have been written together or separately, with equal frequency, I have generally written them separately, since this seems to make a more vivid impact on the reader in investing each element with some of its original independent importance and meaning, often unnoticed or at any rate weakened in the now familiar combinations.

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- i. Middle English Dictionary ^{comp} ~~ed.~~ Hans Kurath ^{and Sherman McAllister Kuhn,} ~~University of~~
~~Michigan Press,~~ Ann Arbor and ~~Oxford University Press,~~ London 1952-
 I was able to consult parts A, B, C, E and F.
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The spelling and grammar of additions to and substitutions in the basic text are made to follow the practice of the Fairfax scribe as closely as possible.

Square brackets are used in the text to indicate the substitution of another reading for that of F, any rearrangement

of the wording of F, or any addition to the text of F. The omission of words contained in the text of F is indicated by an asterisk within the line at the point of omission (unless, as at lines 238 and 251, other indications of variation are already present) and full details of the emendation are given in the footnotes. Where only part of a word in the copy text is emended the square brackets are, if possible, arranged to show this, so that the nature of the emendation can be seen at a glance (see, for example, line 28 beg[an]).

The poem is left unpunctuated, as attempts to supply modern punctuation often obscure rather than reveal the meaning of a Middle English text. The punctuation of the Fairfax manuscript is not reproduced since it is irrelevant to this study. Stanza 42 provides an example of the kind of difficulty we meet when trying to apply modern ideas of sentence structure to the more loosely connected Middle English clauses:

Ladys be not so simple thus I mene
 So dulle of witt so sotty of foly
 That for wordes which sayde ben of the splene
 In faire langage peynted ful plesauntly
 Which ye and moo hold scolys of Dulye
 To make hem al grete wondres to suppose
 But sone they can away their hedes wrye
 And to faire speche lyghtly their eres closeⁱ

i. That such difficulties are by no means limited to this poem is shown by K.G. Wilson's note ('Five Unpublished Secular

Love Poems from MS Trinity College Cambridge 599', Anglia
 LXXII, ~~Things~~ (1954) p. 418) "My punctuation here is
 based largely on desperation".

The critical apparatus contains all substantive variants in the six manuscripts and two printed texts collated. Metrical variants are given where the text has been emended on metrical grounds, but not usually where the reading of the basic manuscript is retained. Spelling variants and dialect forms are not usually recorded in the critical apparatus: some variants which seem to be only irregular spellings for the same word, but which nevertheless are not recorded as alternative spellings in the Oxford English Dictionary, are included in the footnotes as possibly of special interest. Occasionally other non-substantive variants, of interest in themselves or in their context, are given, but the majority have had to be excluded.

In the footnotes the lemma is repeated from the text above, closed by a square bracket and followed by the variant readings, with sigils indicating the manuscripts where these occur. When the sigil of a manuscript does not appear after any of the variant readings given, then the support of that manuscript for the lemma is to be assumed. Where the reading adopted is that of the basic text no sigils follow the lemma. Where the reading comprising the lemma is taken from some other manuscript the lemma is followed by the sigils of all manuscripts supporting that reading. Sigils

are usually cited in or from the order FHLTCSPTh, except where one of these witnesses is defective at the passage under discussion, or where the spelling of the manuscript which would normally be cited first is eccentric, and another manuscript gives a spelling which is nearer to the normal orthography of F. Then the reading of this manuscript is adopted and its sigil promoted to the head of the line of sigils, and the rest follow in their normal order (see, for example, line 604). The order of writing sigils is arbitrary, and is not intended to represent the relationship of the manuscripts.

The presence of any sigil other than the first after a lemma or a variant reading indicates that the manuscript represented by the sigil contains the substantive reading, but not necessarily the spelling of the lemma or variant reading. ~~Exceptions to this~~

Where only the order of words in the basic manuscript is in question, the Fairfax spelling is retained; where another manuscript has the same spelling and also gives the correct word order, its sigil is promoted to the head of the line, otherwise the reading is given twice, first in the Fairfax spelling and then in the spelling of the manuscript supporting the reading. Where the lemma is quoted to show the exclusion of superfluous words a similar practice is followed.

In transcribing variant readings the same practices were observed as for the transcription of the basic text.

This method of Presentation is adopted to warn the reader

whenever the text is in doubt, and to direct him to the footnotes, where he will find sufficient information to judge for himself whether the reading adopted is most likely to be original.

Text and Critical Apparatus

Ballade de la Sale Dame1503-1504

psal. 1. Halfie in a drewe not fully wyl ankyd
 The goldeu elope he wropt under his wing
 Yit not forthy I rose and wel eye ankyd
 Al sodenly myself remembryng
 Of a matere levyng all other thing 5
 Which I sholde do withouten more delay
 For hem the which I darst not dysobey

Text and Critical Apparatus

2. My charge was this to translate by and by
 Al thing forgoys to warte of my penoune
 A boke callid la sale dame 10
 Which master Alenight of remembrance
 Chafe secretary with the name of Penoune
 And heron in this I sholde ankyd
 And in myself grete remembrance

1-92 as 3.

3 not forthy/forthy 7 remembrance 7

6 shalbe/must Pm. more/any more 2

7 ben/his 1; her 1 the which/whiche 7m 15 wyl 3
 dysobey/any way 8

8 this/thus 7

9 as/was 1

10 la/le 8

13 heron/veryon 2. 15m 7.

Balade de La Bele Damesanz mercy

psob. 1. HALffe in a dreame not fully wel awakyd
 The golden slepe me wrapt vndir his wing
 Yit not forthy I rose and wel nye nakyd
 Al sodeynly myself remembring
 Of a matere levyng all other thing 5
 Which I sholde do withouten more delay
 For hem the which I durst not dysobey

2. My charge was this to translate by and by
 Al thing forgeve as parte of my penaunce
 A boke callyd la bele dame sanz mercy 10
 Which master Aleyn made of remembraunce
 Chefe secretare with the kyng of Fraunce
 And herevpon a while I stode musyng
 And in myself gretly ymagenyng

1-92 om S.

3 not forthy]forthy T. rose]arose T.

6 sholde]must PTh. more]any more L.

7 hem]him L; hyr T. the which]whiche Th; to whom H.
 dysobey]sey nay H.

8 this]thus T.

9 as]was L

10 la]om H.

13 herevpon]pervpon H. I]om T.

3. What wyse I sholde perfourme this saide processe 15
 Considering be good avysement
 Myn vnkunnyng and my gret sympl[en]esse
 And ayenward the streyte comaundement
 Which that I had and thus in myn entent
 I was vexed and turned vpp and down 20
 Yet at the last as in conclusioun

4. I cast my clothes on and went my way
 This forseyde charge haueyng in remembraunce
 Til I come to a lusty grene valay
 Ful of floures to see a grete plesaunce 25
 And so boldyd with their benyng sufferauce
 That rede this boke touching the saide matere
 Thus I beg[an] If yt plese yow to here

15 this]the TPTTh.

17 gret]om H. symplenesse]TPTh; symplesse FHLC.

19 thus]this L.

21 Yet at the]And yet at PTh.

24 to]into H.

26 boldyd]voldyd T; boldly PTh.

27 That]That to T; Whiche PTh. the]this LCPTh. saide]

om PTh.

28 began]LTCPTh; begynne FH.

5. Not long ago rydyng an esy pase
 I fell in thought of Ioy ful desperate 30
 With grete disese and peyn so that I was
 Of all lovers the most infortunate
 Sith with his dart most cruel ful of hate
 The deth hath take my lady and maistresse
 And left me sole thus discomfete and mate 35
 Soor languyshyng and in way of dystresse

1.51a 6. Then seyde I thus yt falleth me to cesse
 Eyther to ryme or dytis for to make
 And I surely to make a ful promesse
 To laugh no more but wepe in clothes blake 40
 My ioyful tyme alas nowe is it slake
 For in myself I {fel[e]} no manere ease
 Lette yt be wretyn such fortune I take
 Which neither me nor doth noon other please

29 an esy]on a easy^{easy} (altered from grasy same hand) T.

33 with]by LCPTH. his]hire L.

34 The deth hath take]Dethe hath fro me take T.

35 thus]thys T. discomfete]discomfort C.

36 in]om L.

39 I surely]yet therwith T.

41 is it]hit ys T; dothe it PTh.

42 fele]HLCPTH; felde F; fynde T. ease]of ease PTh.

43 I take]as I take PTh. 44 doth noon other]noon other doth TPTH.

7. Iff it were so my wille or myn entent 45
 Were constrenyd a Ioyfull thing to write
 [My pen] cowth [neuer haue] knowlych what it ment
 To speke therof my tonge hath no delyte
 And with my mouth if I laugh moche or lite
 Myn eyn sholde make a countenaunce vntwre 50
 Myn hert also wolde haue therof dyspite
 The wepyng teres haue so large Issue

8. Thise seke lovers y leve that to hem longes
 Whiche lede here lyffe in hope of allegeaunce
 That is to say to make balade or songes 55
 Euereche of theym as they fele their greuaunce
 For she that was my ioy and my plesaunce
 Whos soule I pray god of his mercy save
 She hath my will my hertis ordenaunce
 Which lyth with hir vndir hir tumbe in grave 60

45 so]so that T.

46 Were constrenyd]Constrayned^{were} PTh.

47 My pen]^{TL}~~TH~~CPTH²; Myn eyn FH¹. neuer haue knowlych^{neuer haue knowlech} LC; haue
 no knowlych FT; haue knowlege H¹; neuer knowe PTH².

49 And]Tho PTh. if]om PTh. 50 eyn]ey L.

53 Thise]The T. longes]longed L.

55 balade]baladys TPTH. or]and Th.

56 fele]fynde L.

60 lyth]bethe L. with hir]here PTh. vndir hir]within this
 PTh. in]I LTCPTH.

9. From this tyme forth tyme is to holde my pese
 It werith me this mater for to trete
 Let other lovers put hemself in prese
 Ther seson is my tyme is now foryete
 Fortune with strenghe [the forser hath] vnschete 65
 Wheryn [was speryd] al my worldly ⁱrechesse
 And al the goodes which that I have gete
 In my best tyme of youth and lustynesse
10. Love hath me kept vndir his gouernaunce
 Yef I mysdede god graunt me forgyfnes 70
 If I did welle yet felt I no plesaunce
 It causid nother Ioy nor heuynese
 For whan she deide that was my good maistres
 Al my welefare than made the same purchase
 The deth hath set my boundes of wittnesse 75
 Which for no thing myn hert shal neuer passe

64 now]nygh T.

65 with]by LTCPTH. the forser hath]^{LH}~~HL~~CPTH; hath the forser FT.

66 was]HLTCPTH; were F. speryd]LTPTh^{H2}; sprad FH¹C.

67 that]om- LT.

71 felt]fele T.

72 causid]causeth T. nother]no T. nor]but T.

73 that]whyche T. my]al my LC. good]om HLTCPTH.

74 Al my]My good LC; My PTH. than made]made than H.

75 set]shette PTh^{H2}. boundes]bondes PTH.

11. In this gret though[t] sore trowbelid in my mynde
 Allone thus rood I all the morow tyde
 Til at the last [it] happid me to fynde
 The place wheryn I cast me to abyde 80
 When that I had no ferther for to ryde
 And as I went my loggeyng to purvey
 Ryght sone I herd but litill me besyde
 In a ga[r]deyn wher mynstrelles gan to play
 12. With that anone I went me bakermore 85
 Myself and I me thoght we were ynowe
 But tweyn that wer my frendes herebefore
 Had me espied and [yet I] wote not howe
 They come for me awayward I me drowe
 Somwhat by force somewhat by their request 90
 That in no wyse I couth myself reskowe
 But nede I must come yn and see the feste

77 thought]LTCPTh; thoughtes FH. my]om PTh.

78 rood I]I roode T.

79 it]HLTCPTh; I F.

80 cast]purposid H. abyde]bide H.

81 for]forth H.

83 but]a PTh.

84 gardeyn]HLTCPTh; gandeyn F.

87 herebefore]heretofore T.

88 yet I]LPTh; om F. yet]om HTC. wote]wyst T.

92 But]Bud C. nede]nedes PTh.

13. At my comyng the ladys euerychone
 Bad me welcome god wot ryght gentilly
 And made me chere euereche be on and one 95
 A gret dele bettir than I was worthi
 And of their grace shewed me grete curteysy
 With good disport bycause I sholde not morne
 That day I bode stille in thair company
 Which was to me a gracious soiourne 100

14. The bordes were sprad in ryght lytel space
 The ladys satte eche as [he]_m semed beste
 Were none that [dyd]seruyce within] that place
 But chosen men ryght of the godelyeste
 And some the[r] were peraventur most frescheste 105
 That sawe theire Iuges syttyng ful demure
 Wythout semblant ayther to most or lest
 Notwythstondyng they had hem vndir cure

f. 52a

95 euereche]euery TTh; euer L. be]om LTh. and]by LTh.
 96, 97 Lines transposed T. 97 grete]theyr T.
 98 morne]mone T. 99 bode]abode T.
 101 ryght]full T. 102 hem]HLTCS^PTh; am F. (1)
 103 Were]Where L; Ther^e were TTh. none]no PTh. that]_h
om LTh. dyd seruyce]TLCS; serued FH; deedly seruauntes
 PTh. within] LTCS; in FHPTh. that]_h(2) the Th.
 105 some ther were]_hTCSPTh; there were sume L; some they were FH.
peraventur]peraunter CS. most]more T; om H.
 106 syttyng]om PTh. 108 Notwythstondyng]But natwithstandyng T.

17. Other they were that seruyd in the halfe
15. Among alle other one I gan espye
 Which in gret thought ful often com a[nd] went 110
 As man that had ben rauyshed vtterly
 In his langage not gretly delygent
 His countenaunce he kept with grete turment
 But his desire farre passed his reson
 For eue[r] his eey went aftir his entent 115
 Ful many a tyme whan it was no seson
16. To make good chere ryght sore hymself he peyned
 And out[e]ward he feyned grete gladnesse
 To syng also be force he was constrenyd
 For no plesaunce but verray shamefastnesse 120
 For the compleynt of his most heuynesse
 Come to his voice alway withoute request
 Lyke as the sowne of birdes doth expresse
 Whan thei syng lowde in firthe or [in] forest

-
- 109 Among] Amanges L.
 110 Which]Wyth S. and]^{LH}LTCSPTH; a F.
 111 man]oon LTCSPTH. 113 turment]trament L.
 115 euer]^{THL}LTCSPTH; euery F. went]yode H.
 116 Ful]At H. a]om T.
 117 good]om PTH; ryght]full T; om PTH. he]om CS.
 peyned]feynynd T.
 118 outward]H; outward F; outwardys T; outwardly LCSPTh.
 120 but]but for T.
 123 birdes]briddis LS. expresse]doutles T.
 124 firthe]frith HLTCPTH. in(2)]LTCSPTH; om FH.

17. Other ther were that seruyd in the halle 125
 But [~~no~~on] lyke hym as after myne avyse
 For he was pale and somewhat lene withalle
 His speche also trembled in feerful wyse
 And euer alon but when he did seruice
 Alle blake he ware and no device but playn 130
 Me thought by hym as my wit couth suffice
 His hert was no thing in his owne demayne

18. To feste hem alle he dyd his delygence
 And wele he couth ryght as [it] semed me
 But euermore when he was in presence 135
 His chere was do it wolde non othir be
 His scolemaister had such auctoryte
 That al the while he bode ^stil in the place
 Speke couth he not but vpon hir beaute

f. 52 b He lokyd still with ryght a petous face 140

126 noon]LTCSPTh; not FH. hym]om LCS. as after]for soth to T.
 128 His speche]He spake T. trembled]tremblyng T; tremlyd S.
 130 but]put S.
 131 wit]wyll T.
 132 no^tthing]then nat T.
 134 And]As T. it]LTCSPTh; om FH.
 135 But]And T.
 136 non othir]no bettyr T.
 137 scolemaister]scolemaystres T.
 138 al the]om T. bode]stode C.
 140 with ryght a]with a right L; ryght with a T.

19. With that his hede he turned at the last
 For to beholde the ladys euerechone
 But euer in one he set his eey stedfaste
 On hir the which his thought was most opon
 And of hys eeyn the s[hote] I knewe anone 145
 Which fedred was with ryght humble requestes
 Than to myself I sayed be god allone
 Such oon was [I o]r that I sawe these gestes

20. Out of the prese he went ful esely
 To make stable his heuy countenaunce 150
 And wit ye wele he sighed tendirly
 For his sorowes and woful remembraunce
 Then in hymself he made his ordenaunce
 And forth withalle come to bringe in the mes
 But for to luge his [most] ruful semblaunce 155
 God wote i[t] was a pitous entermes

141-188 om S.

143 stedfaste]stefast L; faste H.

144 the]om PTh. most]euer T.

145 And]For PTh. shote]LTCPTH²; seght F; sight H¹. knewe]kewe L.

146 fedred]fearfull PTh. 147 god]good P.

148 I or]LTPTh²; or y C; ther FH¹. that]euer T. gestes]iestes
 PTh. 150 his]om L.

151 tendirly]wonderly PTh; wondersly H². 154 the]a L.

155 for]om T. luge]beholde with T. his]om T. most]

TLCPTH; om FH. ruful]wofull PTh. semblaunce]penaunce PTh.

156 it]HLTCPTH; is F.

21. Aftir dyner anone they hem avau^{ns}ed
 To daunce aboute these folkes euere^{ch}on
 And forth withal this heuy louer daunced
 Sumtyme with tweyn and somtyme but with one 160
 Vnto hem all his chere was after^{er} one
 Now here now there as fell by aventure
 But euer among he drewe to hir allone
 Whiche he most drede of lyfyng creature
22. To myne avice good was his purveaunce 165
 When he hir chase to his maistresse allone
 If that hir hert were set to his plesaunce
 As muche as was hir beautevous persoon
 For who that euer^{er} set his trust vpon
 The report of their eyn without^{en} more 170
 He myght be dede and graueⁿ vndir * stone
 Or euere he sholde his hertis ease restore

- 158 daunce]daunct Th. aboute]aboute Th. these]the TPT^h.
 159 louer]om LC; man he PTh.
 160 but]om LPTh.
 161 after]euer T.
 163 among]anone C.
 164 he most]moost he L. drede]louyd T.
 169 that]so PTh. set]setteth CPTh; wyll set T.
 170 their]the PTh; suche T. eyn]oon then T. withouten]^{PLC}~~he~~PTh;
 without FHT.
 171 graue^en]^{FC}CPTh; graue FHL. stone]HLTPTh; a stone FC.
 172 he]she C.

23. In hir fayled no thing as I couth gesse
 f.53a O [wys]e nor othir preuey ne [a]pert
 A garnison she was of all goodnesse 175
 To make a frounter for a louers hert
 Ryght yong and fressh a woman ful couert
 Assured wel here port and eke hir chere
 Wel at hir ease withoute woo or smert
 Al vndirneth the standarte of daunger 180
24. To se the feste it weryed me ful sore
 For hevy Ioy doth sore the hert travayle
 Out of the prese I me withdrew therfore
 And set me down [alone] behinde a trayle
 Ful of leeues to se a gret mervayle 185
 With grene withes ybounden wonderly
 The leves were so thik withouten faile
 That thoroughout myght no man me espie

173 as]that TCPTh.

174 O]In any T. wyse]TCPTh^{H2}; vice FH¹L. nor othir]nether T.
 ne]or H. apert]C; pert FHLTPTh.

175 garnison]garyson LPTh; gramyson T. goodnesse]goodlynesse TPTh.

176 a frounter]a frente L.

178 here]with hyr T; of PTh. hir(2)]of PTh; om L.

179 Wel]Went T. 182 sore the hert]the herte sore C.

183 withdrew]withdrowe Th. 184 down]adowne L. alone]LTCPTH;

om FH. 186 withes]wrethes PTh. ybounden]ybounde full T.

188 thoroughout]HL^c; thorghout FTPTh. myght no man]no man might
 PTh. me]om T.

25. To his lady he come ful curtesly
 When he thought tyme to daunce with hir a [t]race 190
 Syth in an herbere made ful plesauntly
 They rested hem fro thens but lytil space
 Nygh hem were non a certeyn of compace
 But oonly they as ferre as I couth see
 And saue the trayle ther I had chose my place 195
 There was no more betwix theym tweyn and me

26. I herde the louere syghyng wonder sore
 For ay the nere the sorer it hym sought
 His inwarde payn he couth not kepe in store
 Ne for to speke so hardy was he noght 200
 His leche was nere the gretter was his thought
 He mused sore to conquere his desire
 For no man may to more penaunce be brought
 Than in his he[te] to bring him to the fire

189 his]this LTh.

190 thought tyme]hym thought T. a trace]HCSPTh; attrace FLT.

191 Syth]Set PTh².

192 lytil]a litell LPTh.

193 a certeyn of]of a certayne PTh; a cert^aeyn T. compace]space T.

195 And]om PTh. ther]there as LT.

196 betwix]betwene TTh.

197 wonder]very P.

198 nere]more LTh. sought]thought T.

199 His]Whos T. 202 sore]so P.

203 penaunce]sorowe S. 204 hete]LTCSPTh²; hert FH¹.

27. The hert began to swell within his chest 205

So sore streyned for angwyssh and for payn

That al to peces almost it to-brest

When both at oones so sore it dyd constreyne

f.53b

Desire was bolde but shame yt can refreyne

The toon was large the tother was ful close 210

Noo lytle charge was laide on him certeyn

To kepe suche werre and haue so many foos

28. [Ful often tymes to speke hymself he peyned

But shamefastnesse and drede sayde euer nay

Yit at the last so sore he was constrenyd 215

When he ful long had put it in delay

To his lady ryght thus then gan he say

With dredful voice wepyng half in a rage

For me was purveyd an vnhappy day

When I first had a sight of your visage] 220

205 hert]hete T.

206 streyned]constrayned P. for(2)]om P.

209 can]gan LCSPTh; dyd T. refreyne] restreyne T.

211 was laide on him]on hym was leyde T.

213-220 om F; text based on H.

213 tymes]tyme LTCSP. peyned]feynyd T.

216 ful]om L. long had]hade longe L.

217 thus]thys T. then]he T. he]to T.

219 vnhappy]happy T.

29. I suffre payn god wot ful hote brennyng
 To cawse my deth al for my true seruice
 And I se wel ye reche therof no thing
 Nor take non heede of yt in no kyns wyse
 But when I speke after my best avyse 225
 Ye set it [at] noght but make therof a game
 And though I swe so gret an entirpryse
 It peyreth not your worshipp nor your fame

30. Alas what shulde be to you preiudice
 Yf that a man do love you faythfully 230
 To your worshipp esc[hew]yng euery vice
 So am I youres and wil be verreyly
 I chalange noght of ryght and reson why
 For I am hoole submyte to your seruise
 Ryght as ye list it be [right] so wil I 235
 To bynde myself wher I was in Fraunchise

221 hote]sore T. brennyng]burnyng C. 222 To]Do T.
 224 non heede of yt]therof hede T. kyns]kynde PTh; maner T.
 225 my]in/ni/m L. avyse]deuyse T. 226 at]CPTh; om FHLTS.
 227 swe]shew T; se S; suffre L.
 228 It]Yet PTh. peyreth]apeyreth T.
 229 shulde]shulde it PTh². 230 faythfully]fastfully L.
 231 your]euery T. eschewyng]ThCSPTH²; escusyng FH¹.
 232 wil]shal T. 233 chalange]shall T. noght]not H¹T.
 234 submyte]submytted L. to]unto PTh.
 235 right]⁽⁴⁾LCSPTh; even FH; om T.
 236 To]Do T. was]am T.

31. Though it be so that I can not deserue
 To haue youre grace but [alwey]lyf in drede
 Yet suffre me you [for] to loue and serue
 Without maugre of youre most goodelihe^de 240
 Both feyth and trouth I geve your womanhede
 And my seruice withoute ayein calling
 Love hath me bounde wythouten wage or mede
 To be youre man and leve all othir thing

32. Whan this lady had hard al [h]is language 245
 She yafe answe^r ful soft and demurely
 Withoute chaungeyng of colour or corage
 No thing in haste but mesurably
 Me thinketh sire y[our]^e[thought is] grete foly
 Purpose ye not youre labour for to cese 250
 For thynke[th] not while that ye lyf and I

f.54a

In this matere to sett your hert in pese

237 be|so]so be T. that]om HT. not]hit nat T.
 238 haue]half L. alwey]LTSPTh; alwey to C; ay to FH.
 239 for]LTCSPTh; om FH.
 241 geve]ye C.
 242 ayein]any LPTh.
 245 his]LTCS; this FHPTh.
 246 yafe]yaf hym C.
 249 your^e]thought is]LCSPTh; your hert ys T; ye do ful FH.
 251 thynketh]^{CL}SPTh; thynke ye FHT. while]whiles LCSPTh.
 that]om PTh. ye]y C.
 252 this]your T. pese]ese T.

33. Ther may non make the pece but oonly ye
 Whiche are the [ground and cause] of al this ware
 For with youre eeyn the letters wretyn be 255

Lamaunt

Be which I am defyde and put afarre
 Your plesaunt looke my werray lode starre
 Was made heraude of thilke same dyffiaunce
 Which vttirly [b]ehyght me to forbarre
 My faythfull trust and al myn affyaunce 260

34. To lyve in wo he hath grete fantasye
 And of his hert also hath slypper holde
 That only for behaldyng of an eeye
La dame Can not abyde in pece as reson wolde
 Other or me yf *ye lyst to beholde 265
 Oure eeyn er made to loke why shulde we spare
 I take no kepe nother of yonge ne olde
 Who felith smart I counsel him be ware

 grounde and cause
 254 ground and cause]LCSPTh; cause and ground FHT.
 256 defyde]deferryd T.
 258 thilke]thys T; pe C. same]saunce T.
 259 behyght]THLCSPTh; he hyght F. to forbarre]for to berre LPTh.
 262 hath]om PTh.
 263 for]for pe H.
 265 me]ne T. yf^c]HLTSPTh; yf that F. to]ye may PTh.
 267 no]in T.
 268 felith smart]seketh harme T.
 283 make]mak T. for]on S.
 284 no]on S.

35. Iff yt be soo oon hurte an other soore 285
 In his defaute that felyth the greuaunce 270
 Of verry ryght a man may do no more

Lamaunt

Yet reson wolde yt were in remembraunce
 And sith fortune not oonly by his chaunce
 Hath caused me to suffre al this peyn 290
 But your beaute with al the circumstaunce 275
 Why list ye haue me in so grete disdeyn

36. To your persoon ne haue I no dysdeyn
 Nor neuer had trewly nor [naught] wil haue
 Nor ryght grete loue nor haterede in certeyn

Ladame

Nor your counsel to knowe so god me save 280
 Yf suche beleue be in your mynde Igraue
 That lytel thing may do yow [gret] plesaunce
 Yow to begile or make you for to rave
 I will not cause no suche encomberaunce

 269 be soo]so be T. oon]a S. an other] and other S.
 270 the]no C.
 273 not]om PTh; underlined for erasure H². his]her PThH².
 oonly]oon L.
 275 But]By PThH². 277 no]om T.
 278 trewly]om H. naught]LCPTH; not S; neuer FHT.
 280 your]om S.
 281 beleue]loue LPThH²; conseyte T. Igraue]graue LT,
 282 gret plesaunce]^{TL}CS; plesaunce FH; displesaunce PTh.
 283 make]mok T. for]om S.
 284 no]om S.

37. What euer yt be that me hath this purchasyd 285

f.54b

Wenyng hath not dysseyued me certayn

But fervent loue so sore me hath ychasyd

Lamaunt

That I vnwarre am casten in your chayn

And sith so is as fortune list ordeyne

Al my welfaire is in youre handes Ifalle 290

In eschewyng of more myschevous payn

Who sonest dieth his care is lest of alle

38. This seknes is ryght esy to endure

But fewe peple yt causeth for to dye

But what they mene I knowe yt verry sure 295

La dame

Of more comfort to drawe the remedye

Such ben ther now pleynyng ful pitously

That fele god wote not alther grettest payne

And yf so be love hurte so greuouslye

Lesse harme yt were one sorowful then tweyn 300

285 me hath]hathe me TCS. this]thus LTSPTh.

286 me]om T.

287 me hath]hath me TPTh. ychasyd]chasid L; enbrasyd T.

288 I]om T. vnwarre am]am vnware L. casten]cast T.

289 is]hit ys T. as]that T. ordeyne]so ordeyne T.

290 Ifalle]falle LTCSPTh. 292 sonest]suneth S.

293 This]The T. ryght]full T. esy]ease L.

295 yt]om T.

297 now]nought with 't' crossed out in H; lew T.

298 fele]faylen T.

300 lesse]lest S.

39. Alas madame yf that [it] myght yow please

Muche bettir were be way of gentylnesse

Of on sor[y] to make tweyn wele at ease

Lamaunt

Than hym to stroye that lyveth in distresse

For my desire is nother more ne lesse 305

But my seruice to do for your plesaunce

In eschewyng al manere doublesnesse

To make two Ioyes in stede of oo grevaunce

40. Off love I seke nother plesaunce ne ease

Nor grete desire nor ryght grete affiaunce 310

Though ye be seke yt [doth] me no thing please

Ladame

Also I take no hede to youre plesaunce

Chese whoso wolle their hertis to avaunce

Fre am I now and fre I wil endure

To be reuled be manes governaunce 315

For erthly good nay that I yow ensure

301 it]LTCSPThH²; I FH¹.

302 Muche]Hyt T. bettir were]were bettyr T; better it were PThH².

303 sorow]LTCSPThH²; sorow FH¹. wele]om L.

304 stroye]dystroy TPh. 306 to]I T.

307 manere]manere of LSP.

309 ne written with small superscript r in F which seems to have
been added by a later hand.

310 grete desire]right gret loue LCS; haue therin PTh. nor]no PTh.

ryght]om LPh. 311 doth]HLTCSPTh; om F.

312 no]noon LC. to]of PTh. 314 I wil]will I LTCSPTh.

315 manes]man is L. governaunce]goueraunce L.

316 that]om H¹; inserted in margin H².

41. Love whiche [that] Ioye and sorow doth depart
 Hath set the ladys out of [al] seruage
 And largely doth graunt hem for their parte

Lamaunt

Lordshipp and reule of euery maner age 320

f. 55a

The poore seruaunt noght ha[th] of avauntage

But what he may gete oonly of purchase

And he that ones to love doth his homage

Ful often tyme dere bought ys [the] r[echac]e

42. Ladys be not so simple thus I mene 325

So dulle of witt so sotty of foly

That for wordes which sayde ben of the splene

Ladame

In faire langage peynted ful plesauntly

Which ye and moo hold scolys of Dulye

To make hem [al] grete wondres to suppose 330

But sone they can [away their hedes] wrye

And to faire speche lyghtly their eres close

317 that]LTCSPTh; om FH. Ioye]yoy S.

318 the]yow T. al]LTCSPTh; om FH. (ladys]ladi S.)

319 hem]yow T. their]yowre T. 320 maner]maner of PTh.

321 noght hath]LTCSPTh²; noght haue F; not hath H¹; hath noon T.

of]om T. 322 of]by PTh. 323 he]om S.

324 tyme]tymes Th. bought ^{away her hedes}ys the rechace]LTC; bowght is the

rychesse SPTh; bought ys rychesse F; his richesse bought has H.

326 sotty]dotyd T. of]in PTh. 327 wordes]the wurdys S. of]on H.

329 moo]me T. hold scolys]scolys holden H. of]om H.

Dulye]dieulye H¹; dayly PThH².

330 al]LTCSPTh; of FH. wondres]wondre is L; wondis S.

331 away their hedes]LTCSPTh; ^{away maire hede}their hedes away FH. ~~hede]hede L.~~

43. Ther ys no man that Iangelyth besely
 And set hys hert and al his mynd therfore
 That be reson may pleyne so pitously 335

Lamaunt

As he that hath muche hevynesse in store
 Whose hede ys hole and seyth [that] it ys sore
 His feyned chere ys hard to kepe iⁿ mve
 But thought whiche is vnfenyd euermore
 The wordes preuen as the werkes s[ew]e 340

44. Love ys subtile and hath a grete a[w]ayte
 Sharpe in worching in gabbyng grete plesaunce
 And can hym venge of such os by disceyte
Ladame Wold [fele and know] his secrete gouernaunce
 And maketh hem to obey hys ordynaunce 345
 By chereful wayes as in him is supposed
 But when * they fallen into repent^uaunce
 Than in a rage their counsell ys dysclosed

334 set]settith HTPTh.

337 hole]nat sore T. that]LTCSPTh; om FH. sore]nat sore T.

339 whiche]that T.

340 preuen]present T. sewe]H¹LTCSPTh²; sue F.

341 awayte]LTCSPTh²; abayte FH¹.

342 in⁽²⁾]and L.

343 can hym]him can L. of]on T.

344 fele and know]^SLTCSPTh; know and fele FH.

345 hem]him LS. to obey]tobey S.

346 wayes]wyse T. him]theym TCSPTh.

347 when]LTCSPTh; when that FH. into]vnto T.

45. Sith for as muche as god and eke nature
Hath avauncid love to so hye degre 350

Muche sharpar is the poynt this am I sure
Lamaunt [Ye]t greueth more the faute wher euer yt be
Who hath no colde of hete hath no deynte
The ton for the tother asked ys expresse
And of plesaunce knoweth non the certeynte 355
P. 55 b But yt be wonne with thought and hevynesse

46. As for plesaunce it ys not alway oon
That yow is swete me think a byttir peyn
Ye may not me constreyn ne yit ryght noon
Ladame Aftir your lust to love that ys but wayn 360
To challenge love be ryght was neuer sayn
But hert assent before bonde or promyse
For strenght nor force may not attayn certayn
A wil that stant enfeofed in fraunchise

350 to]om L. 351 sharpar]sharpe PTh. this]thus LTPTh. am I]Iam T.
352 Yet]LTCSPTh; It FH. greueth]grueth L.
354 the(2)]om L. asked]axyd]TCS; axex L.
355 non]nat TC; no P. the]om PTh. certeynte]certeyne Th.
356 be wonne]wone C; wönen be T; be one PThH². with]by S; in PTh
357 As]And as L.
358 yow is]to yow ys T; thought is L; you thinke PThH². me]
I PTh. a]it Th.
360 lust]list L. love]lyue T.
361 chalenge]shall T. neuer]men T. 362 or]and LSPTh.
363 nor]and PTh. certayn]om PTh.

47. Ryght faire lady god myght I neuer please 365

Yf I seche othir ryght as in this case

But for to shewe yow pleyndly my dysese

Lamaunt

And your mercy abyde and eke your grace

Yf I purpose your honor to defface 365

Or euer dyd god and fortune me shende 370

And that I neuer ryghtwysly purchace

On oonly ioy vnto my lyves ende

48. Ye and othir that swere such othes faste

And so condempne and cursen too and froo 365

Ful sekyrly ye wene your othes last 375

Ladame

No lenger then the wordes ben agoo

And god and eke his seyntis laugh also

In suche sweryng ther is no stedfastnesse

And these wrecches that have ful trest therto

Aftir they wepe and waylen in distresse 380

365 I]me S. myght]mote LTCSPTh.

366 as]om PTh.

367 yow]om S.

368 abyde]to abide LTCSPTh. eke]om S

371 ryghtwysly]wyssely S; vnrightfully LPTh.

372 On]om L.

373 othir]suche other P.

375 sekyrly]surely P.

377 laugh]dysplesyn T.

49. He hath no corage of a man trwly
 That sechith plesaunce wurshipp to dispise
 Nor to be called forth is not worthy
Lamaunt The erth to touch the eire in no kyns wyse
 A trusty hert a mouth wythout fant[is]e 385
 These ben the strenght of euery man of name
 And who that layth his feyth for lytle price
 He lesith both his wurshypp and his fame

50. A currisch hert a mouth that is curtayse
f. 56a Ful weel ye wote they be not acordyng 390
 Yet feyned chere ryght sone may theym appeys

Ladame Where of malice ys set all their worchyng
 Ful fals semblaunt they bere a[nd] trwe semyng
 Their name their fame their tonges be [bu]t feyned
 Worshipp in hem is put in foryetyng 395
 Not repentyd nor in no wise compleyned

384 the(2)]ne the T. kyns wyse]skynnes wyse C. kyns]kynde L.
 385 fantise]^{seyntise}HLTCSPTh; fantasye F.
 386 These ben]Thus be PTh. man of]maner PTh.
 387 layth]latith H; lesyth T.
 389 currisch]cursed PTh. a mouth]among T.
 390 they]these T.
 391 ryght]ful H. may theym]theym may T.
 393 and]LTCSPTh; a FH¹. semyng]menyng H¹.
 394 be]om PThH². but]ICSPThH²; om L; not FH¹. feyned]vnfayned L.
 395 foryetyng]for etyng C.

51. Who thinketh ylle no good may him befall
 God of his grace graunte eche man hys deserte
 But for his love among your thoughtes all

Lamaunt

As thynk apone my woful sorowes smarte 400
 For of my peyn wh[eth]er your tendre hert
 Of swete pite be not therewith agreved
 And yf your grace to me [were] discouuert
 Then be your mean sone sholde I be releved

52. A lyghtsome herte a foly of plesaunce 405
 Ar muche better the lesse while they abyde
 Thay make you think and bring yow in a traunce

Ladame

But that seknes wol sone be remedyde
 Respyt your thought and put al this onasyde
 Ful good disportis weryth men al day 410
 To helpe ne hurt my will ys not aplyde
 Who trouth me not I lett yt passe away

399 your]hys TS. 400 sorowes]sorowe H.
 401 whether]LTCSPTh; wher FH.
 403 yf]of PTh. to me were]LTCPh; were to me S; to me be FH.
 404 Then]That PTh. sone]om T.
 406 they]that they S.
 407 think]thyng C. in]into T. a]om S.
 408 that]the S.
 410 men]me SPTh. disportis]disporte PTh.
 411 not]om T.
 412 I]om C. yt]him LS; them PTh.

53. Who hath a brid[d]e a faucon or an hounde
 That foloweth hym for love in euery place
 He cherysith hym and kepeth hym ful sounde 415
Lamaunt
 Out of his sight he will not [him] enchace
 And I that sette my wittes in this cace
 On yow allon withowten any chaunge
 A[m] put vnder moch ferther out of grace
 And [lesse sett] by than other that be straunge 420

54. Though I make chere to euery man aboute
 For my worshypp and of myn own fraunchise
 To yow I nylle do so withoute doute
Ladame
 In eschewyng * all manere preiudice
 P. 56 b For wytt ye well love ys so lytel wyse 425
 And in beleve so lyghtly wil be brought
 That he taketh all at hys own devyse
 Of thing god wote that seruyth hym of noght

413 Who]Who so T. bridde]H¹; byrde TCPThH²; bride FLS.
 415 hym(2)]om H.
 416 Out]But T. not him]LSPTh; hym nat TC; not FH.
 419 Am]LTCSPThH²; And FH¹.
 420 lesse sett]^{lesse sette}LTCSPTh; sett lesse FH.
 422 of]for SPTh.
 424 all]Th~~LTC~~SPTh; of all FH. manere]maner of S.
 425 so]om T. wytt]wote LPTh.
 426 in]y S.

F.59b 55.

If I be love and [be] my trwe seruice

Lese the good chere that straungers have alway 430

[W]hereof shulde serue my trouth in ony wise

Lamaunt

Lesse then to hem that come and goo al day

F.60a

Whiche holde of you no thing that is non nay

Also in yow ys lost to my semynge

Al curtesy which of reson wolde say 435

That love by love were lawfulle deseruynge

56.

Curteysy is alleyd wondere nere

With wurshipp which hym loueth * tendyrly

And he wol not be bounde for no prayerLadame

Nor for [no] yift I say yow verely 440

But his good chere depart ful largely

Wher[e] hym lyketh as his conceyte wol fal

Guerdon constreynte a yift done thankfully

These tweyn may not accorde ne neuer shal429-476 om L; dislocated F; see Introduction p. 18.429 be(2)]HTCSPTh; om F.

431 Whereof]HTCSPTh; Thereof F. shulde]I schuld C; shall PTh.

432 hem]hym PTh. 433 holde]had T. non]to no T.

434 to]vnto S; as to PTh.

435 of]of all T. wolde]wyll TCSPTH.

436 by]for PTh. deseruynge]desyryng PTh.438 With]To TCSPTH. ^{tenderly}tendyrly]TCSPTH; best and tendyrly FH.440 no]TCSPTH; om FH. yift]gyftes PTh.

442 Where]HTCSPTh; Wheryn F.

444 may not]can neuer PTh.

57. As for guerdon I [s]eche non in this cace 445

For that deserte to me [it] ys to hye

Wherefore I aske yowr pardon and your grace

Lamaunt

Syth me behoueth deth or your mercy

To yife the gode where it wantyth trewly

That were reson and [a] curteys[e] manere 450

And to your own moche bettir were worthy

Then to strangers to shew hem lovely chere

58. What calle ye good fayn wold I that I wyst

That pleseth one an other smertyth sore

But of his owne to large is he that lyste 455

Ladame

Yeve moche and lesse al his good fame therfore

On sholde not make a graunt lytle nor more

But the request were ryght wele acordyng

Yf worshypp be not kept and set before

Al that ys left ys bot a litle thyng 460

445 seche]HTCSPTh; beseche F. cace]place T.

446 it]CTSPTh; om FH.

447 aske]ax T. yowr]you H.

448 deth]om C.

449 where]where that T.

450 a curteyse]TCSPTH; curteysy FH.

451 worthy]worth T. 452 lovely]lowly T.

454 an|other]and other T. smertyth]smertyn T.

456 al]om PTh; fame]name PTh.

458 ryght]om S.

459 before]afore S.

59. Into this world was neuer formed noon

Nor vnder heven creature ybore

Nor neuer shal save oonly your persoon

Lamaunt To whom your worshipp toucheth half so sore

But me which haue no seson les ne more 465

Of youth nor age but stille in your seruice

I have noon eeyn no wit no[r] mouth in store

f. 60 b But al ben yeven to the same office

60.

A ful grete charge hath he withoutenne faile 470

That his wurshypp kepith in sekirnesse

But in daungerne he settyth his travayle

Ladame That feoffeth [i]t with others besynesse

To hym that longeth honour and noblesse

Vpon noon othir shulde not he awayte

For of [hys] own so mucche hath he the lesse 475

That of other mucche foloweth the conceyte

461 neuer formed]founded neuer PTh.

462 creature]o creature H.

463 save]savyng S.

467 no]ne T. nor]ST~~ne~~SPTh; no FH.

468 But]That ne H.

472 it]HTCSPTh; yit F. others]other T.

474 shulde]ne shuld S. not he]he nought S; nat be Th; he T.

475 hys]TCSPTh; om FH. he]om C.

476 foloweth]felyth S. the]thayr S.

f. 57b 61. Your eeyn hath sett the print which that I fele
 Withyn my hert that where some euer I goo
 If I do thyng that sowneth vnto wele

Lamaunt Nedes must it come from yow and fro no moo 480
 Fortune wil thus that I for weel or woo
 My lyfe endure youre mercye abydyng
 And verrey ryght wil that I think also
 Of your wurshipp aboue al other thing

f. 58a 62. To your wurshipp se wele for that ys nede 485
 That [ye] your seson spend not al in vayn
 As touching myne I rede you take non hede

Ladame By your foly to put yourself in peyn
 To ouercome ys good and to restreyn
 An hert which ys dysceyued folyly 490
 For wers yt is to breke then bow certeyn
 And bettir bow than fall to sodeynly

 477 Your]Youre owne L. the print]they^m present T.
 480 Nedes]Nede LTCS. must it]hit must T. no moo]no nomo S.
 481 thus]this SPTh.
 485 se]so L.
 486 y[ye]HLTCSPTh; om F. your seson spend not al]FH; spende not youre
 season al LTCPTh; spend not all your seson S.
 489 restreyn]refrayne L.
 491 then]the T.
 492 And]om LPTh. fall to]to fall PTh.

63. Now faire lady think sythe it first began
That love had sett myn hert vnder your cure
I[t] neuer myght ne trewly I ne can

495

Lamaunt

Non othir serue whiles I shal here endure
In most fre wise therof I make you sure
Which may not be withdrawe this is no nay
I most abyde al manere aventure
For I may not put to nor take away

500

64. I holde yt for no yift in sothefastnesse
That one offerth wher that it is forsake
For such yift is abonndonyng expresse

Ladame

That with worschipp ayen may not be take
He hath hert[es] ful fele that lyst to make
A yift lyghtly that put is in refuse
But he is wyse that such conseyte wol slake
So that him nede neuer * study ne muse

505

494 had]hath PTh. your]his LCSPTH; om T.

495 It]LTCSPTh; I FH.

496 Non]Ner T. I shal here]here I shal H.

498 this]it S.

500 not]nother PTh. to]om T.

502 offerth]offrith HLTSPTh; offereth C. wher]when L.
that(2)] om PTh.

503 such]sith S. yift]a gyfte PTh.

505 hertes]LTCS; hert F; hurte H; an hert PTh. 1st]lust S.

506 in]om L; to PTh. 507 conseyte]concept L.

508 neuer]nother LTCSPTh. study]^{TL}CS; to study FHPTH.

65. [He] sholde not muse that hath his seruice spent
 On hir which ys a lady honorable 510
 And yf I spend my tyme to that entent
Lamaunt Yit at [the] leest I am not repreuable
 Of feyled hert to think I am vnable
 Or me mystoke when I made this request
 By which love hath of entrepris notable 515
 So many hertys geten be conquest

66. If that ye lyst do after my counseile
 Secheth fairer and of more hier fame
 Which in seruice of love wil yow prevale
Ladame Aftir your thought accordyng to the same 520
P. 58 b He hurteth both his wurshipp and his name
 That folyly for tweyn hymself wil trouble
 And he also lesyth his after game
 That surly cannot sett his poyntes double

509 He]LTCSPTh; Who FH. hath]om C.
 511 spend]spede L.
 512 the]HLTCSPTh; om F. leest]last L.
 513 feyled]feyned PTh.
 514 Or]On L. me]y SPTh. mystoke]mistake L. made]most S.
 517 do]to doo L.
 518 Secheth]Secheth a S; Seche a PTh. fairer]ferther T.
 521 both]om C.
 523 he also]also he TC. lesyth]hosithe H.

f.57a 67.

This your counsell be oght that I can se
Is bettir sayed then done to myn avyse
Though I beleve yt not foryeue yt me

Lamaunt

Myn hert is suche so hole wythout fayntise
That yt may [not] yeve credence in no wise
To thing whiche is not sownyng vnto trouth 530
Other counsel it are but fantasyse
Save of your grace to shew pite and routh

68.

I holde him wise that wurchith folily
And when him list can leve and part therfro
But in kunnyng he is to lerne trewly 535

Ladame

That wolde himself condyte and can not so
And he that will not aftir counsel do
His s[ew]te he putteth in desesperaunce
And al the good which sholde falle him to
Is left as de[d]e clene out of remembraunce 540

527 Though]Thought L. yt(2)]om T. 529 yt]I PTh. may not]
LTCS; ne may PTh; may FH. credence]crede L. 530 whiche]that T.
531 Other]Others T. counsel]counsayles T. it]I PThH²; om C.
are]se PThH². but]be but PTh. fantasyse]fantese LS.
532 of]om C. to]om S. 533 folily]not folely L; no foly PTh.
534 And when him list]When he T. and(2)]a S. part therfro]the
part froo L. 536 can[not]canno C.
537, 538 transposed in C. 537 he]om S.
538 sewte]LTCSPTH²; suerte FH¹. he putteth]puttith he L.
in]into PTh. desesperaunce]desperaunce LSPThH²; esperaunce T.
539 And]om L. good]goodys T. which]that LTPTh; which pat C.
540 left]lost LPTh. as]and LPTh; all T. dede]HLTCSPTH; dethe F.

69. Yit wil I sue this matere faiethfully
 Whils I may lyve whateuer be my chaunce
 And yf it happ that in my trouth I dye
Lameunt That deth shal [not] do me no displesaunce
f. 57b But when that I by your harde sufferaunce 545
 Shal dye so trewe and with so grete payne
 Yit shal yt do me moche [the] lesse grevaunce
 Then for to lyf a fals lover certayn

70. Of me gete ye ryght noght this is no fable
 I nylle to you be nother hard ne streyte 550
 And ryght wol not nor manere custumable
Ladame To thynk ye sholde be sure of my conseyte
 Who sechith sorow his be the receyte
 Other counsell can I not fele nor see
 Nor for to lerne I cast not to awayte 555
 Who wil therto let him assay for me

542 may]om PTh. ^{what/}whateuer]oon T. chaunce]myschaunce S.
 543 that]om S.
 544 That]They L; Than PThH². deth]om L. not]HTC; om FLSPTh,
underlined for erasure H². no]not noo L.
 545 harde]ful herd LTCS.
 546 trewe]trewly L. payne]a payne LPThH².
 547 the]LTCSPTH; om FH.
 549 this]it S. 550 nylle]wyll TPTH.
 551 nor manere]no man PTh. custumable]custunable S.
 553 sorow his]sorwe is H¹; sorowys T.
 555 cast]cast me PTh. 556 therto]therof PThH².

71. Onse must it be assayde that ys no nay
 With suche as beth of reputacion
 And of trewe loue the ryght [deuour] to pay
Lamaunt Of fre hertis gotten be due raunson 560
 For fre wil holdeth this opynyon
 That it is grete duresse and discomfort
 To kepe an hert in so streyte a prison
 That hath but oo body for his dysport

72. I knowe so many cases merveillux 565
 [That] I most nede of reson think certeyn
 That such entre ys wonder perileux
Ladame And yit wel more the comyng back agayn
 Good or wor^cshipp therof is seldom seyn
 Wherfore I will not make no such aray 570
 As for to fynde a plesaunce but bareyn
 When it shall cost so dere the frist assay ?

557 must it]it must LS; that hit must T. assayde]saied H¹.
 that]hit TS; this P.
 558 as]that S. 559 deuour]LTCS; dewtis FH; honour PTh.
 563 prison]person S. 564 for]to T.
 565 cases]causes PThH². 566 That]LTCSPTH; Which FH.
 567 such]sith S. entre]entent T; auenture PTh.
 568 comyng]connyng L. back]abak C; om T. agayn]agayue P; certayn
 LTC.
 569 therof is]ys therof T. seyn]seme P.
 570 Wherfore]Where PTh. will not]ne wyll PTh. no]none TC; omLPTh
 571 but]but a PTh. 572 frist]first HLTCSPTh.

f. 59a 73.

Ye have no cause to doute of this matere

Nor yow to meve with no suche fantasise 590

To put me ferre alle oute as a straunger 575

Lamaunt

For your goodnesse [c]an thynk and wele avyse

That I have made a preve in euery wyse

By which my trouth sheweth open evidence

My long abydyng and my trewe seruice 595May wele be knowe be pleyn experience 580

Off werray ryght he may be called trew

And so must he be take in euery place

That can deserue and let as he ne knewLadame

And kepe the good yf he yt may purchase 600

For who that prayeth or seweth in any case 585

Ryght wele ye wote in that [no] trouth ys preved

Suche hath their ben and ar that getyth grace

And lese yt sone when thay yt haue acheved

574 no]none TC. fantasise]fantesye HT.

575 alle]om T.

576 can]HLTCSPTh; gan F.

577 preve]prise PTh.583 deserue]discerne PTh.

585 or]and L. seweth]shewith S; swereth PTh. case]place T.

586 wele ye wote]ye wote well L. in]om T. no]LHTCSPTh; om F.

587 grace]om L.

588 yt haue]haue it LPTh; haue S.

602

604

75. If trouth me cause by vertue sovereyn

f. 59b

To shewe good love and alway fynde contrary 590

And cheryssh that at slethe me wyth the payn

Lamaunt

This ys to me a lovely aduersary

When that pite which long aslepe doth tary

Hath set the fyne of al my hevynesse

Yet her comfort to me most necessarye 595

Shulde set my wil more sur in stablenesse

76. The wooful wyght what may he think or say

The contrary of alle Ioy and gladnesse

A seke body [his] though[t] ys al away

Ladame

[From] hem that fele no sorowe nor seknesse 600

Thus hertes ben of dyuerse besynesse

Which love hath put to ryght grete hynderaunce

And trouth also put in foryetfulnesse

When they [so] sore begynne to syghe askaunce

590 fynde]finde the L.

591 cheryssh]cherith L. at]that HT; al L; which SPTh.

592 lovely]lothely T. 593 which]that S. aslepe]on slepe PTh.

594 fyne]syn S. 595 her]here H¹. necessarye]nessarye L.

596 Shulde]Shal LPTh. sur]surer L. 597 The]A T; Ye C. he]ye TC.

599 body his]HLCSPTh; bodyes T; body F. thought]HLTCSPTh; thoughty
F. al away]alwey TSPTh.

600 From]HLTCSPTh; For F. hem]him LS. sorowe]sore LPTh. nor]or H.

601 Thus]This S. hertes]hurtes HPTh.

602 love]om T. ryght]om LPTh.

604 so]LHTCS; full PTh; om F.

77. Now god defende but he be haueles 605
 Of al worshipp or good that may befall
 That to the wurst turneth by his lewdnes
Lamaunt A yifte of grace or any thyng [at] all
 That his lady vouchesafe vpon hym calle
 Or cherissh hym in honorable wyse 610
 In that defaute whateuer he be that falle
 Deserueth more then d[e]th to suffre twyse

78. Ther is no luge ysett of suche trespase
 By which of ryght on may recouered be
 One cursith fast an other doth manase 615
Ladame Yet dyeth none as ferre as I can see
 But kepe hir cours alway in oo degre
 And euere newe thair labour doth encrease
 To bring ladys by theyr [gret] s[otill]te
 For others gylt in sorow and dysseese 620

605 haueles]harmeles SPTh.
 607 the]om PTh.
 608 thyng]othing L. at]HLTCPTh; all S; om F.
 609 his]ys T. lady]om T.
 612 deth]HLTCSPTH; doth F.
 613 Ther]Where T. ysett]sette S. of]on TPTH.
 614 on]loue PTH².
 616 ferre]for L.
 617 oo]om C. degre]ordre C.
 618 euere newe]euermore LTCSPTh.
 619 gret sotilllte]LTCSPTh; subtilyte FH.

f. 58b 79. Alle be yt so oone do so grete offence
 And be not ded nor put to no Iuyse
 Ryght wel y wote him gayneth no dyffence
Lamaunt But he must ende in ful myschevous wyse
 And alle that euer ys good woole him dispise 625
 For falshede ys so ful of cursydnesse
 That h[igh] worshipp shal neuer have enterprise
 Wher yt reygneeth and hath the wilfulnesse

80. Off that have thay no [gret] fere now a dayes
 Such as wil say and mayntene yt therto 630
 That stedfast trouthe ys no thing for to preyes
Ladame In hem that kepe yt long for wele or wo
 Theyr besy hertys passen too and froo
 They ben so weel reclamyde to the lure
 So wel lerned hem to wythhold also 635
 And al to chaunge when love shuld best endure

621 Allebeyt] Though hit be T. so] so that L.
 622 be] is PTh. no] om LT. Iuyse] Iuesse T; iustyce PTh².
 623 gayneth] greueth S.
 625 that] om PTh. euer] om T. ys] said PTh.
 626 so] om PTh.
 627 high] LCS; her FHT; his PTh. shal] may LCSPTH; om T.
 628 the] his S.
 629 Off] Yef T. have thay] they haue T. gret] LTCSPTh²; om FH¹.
 now a dayes] now of dayes C.
 632 long] om S. for] in SPTh.
 635 hem] & C.

81. Whan oon hath sett his hert in stable wyse
In such a place which is both good and trewe
He shuld not flytt but do forth his seruice

Lamaunt

Always wythoute chaunge of any newe 640
As sone as love begynneth to remewe
Al plesaunce goth anon in litle space
For my party al that [shal I] eschewe
Whils that the soule abydyth in his place

82. To love trwly ther as ye ought of ryght 645
Ye may not be mystaken dout[e]lesse
But ye be foul deceyued * in your sight

Ladame

By lyghtly vnderstondyng as I gesse
Yit may ye wel repele this besynesse
And to reson sumwhat haue attendaunce 650
Moche sunner then to byde b^y fol[e] symplesse

f. 59a

T[he] feble socour of desesperaunce

638 which]as PTh. 640 wythoute]without the T.
641 remewe]renew T. 643 For]As for LTCSPTh. party]part S.
al]om LTCSPTh. shal I]LTCSPTh; I shal FH.
644 Whils]Whyle TPTH. that]om PTh. the]my T.
645 ye]it PTh. 646 doutelesse]^{LH}~~re~~; doutlesse FTCPTH; of
doutelesse S. 647 in]HLTCSPTh; that in F.
648 lyghtly]light PTh^{H2}. 649 wel]ryght well S. repele]
repell SP. this]your^e LTCSPTh. 650 sumwhat haue]haue some PTh.
651 sunner]better LTCSPTh. byde]abide LTCSPTh. fole]CS; foly FH
PTh; foule L; sole T.
652 The]HLTCSPTh; To F. socour]socours T. desesperaunce]esperaunce
T.

83. Reson counseyle wysdom and good avyse

Ben vnder love arested euerycheone

To whiche I can accorde in euery wyse 655

Lamaunt

For they be not rebell but still as stone

Their wille and myne ben medeled al in one

And therwith bounden with so stronge a cheyne

That [a]s in hem departyng shal be none

But pety breke the myghty bonnde atweyne 660

84. Who love[th] not hymself whateuer he be

In love he stant foryet in euery place

And of your woo yf ye have no pite

Ladame

Others pite byleve not to purchase

But beth fully assured in thys cace 665

I am allweys vnder oon ordynaunce

To haue better trusteth not after grace

And al that leveth take to your plesaunce

653 counseyle]counsailed L. counseyle wysdom]wysdom counseyll T.
and]a P.

654 arested]arestyn T; rested S. 656 still]fall T. as]as a TPTH.

657 myne]mynd CS. ben]ar TS; as C. 658 with]in S.

659 as]LTCSPTh; is FH. hem]hevyn S. none]anone H.

660 the]this S. atweyne]in tweyne T.

661 who]Ye PTh. loveth]HLCS; love FPTh; leuyth T. hymself]
yourselfe PTh. he]ye PTh.

662 In love he]That in love PTh.

664 byleve] be loue L. not]ye nat PTh.

665 in]as in PTh. 666 oon]an HT.

667 after]to haue S. 668 leveth]loueth T.

f.56b 85. I haue myn hope so sure and so stedfaste
 That suche a lady shulde not fayle pite 670
 But now alas it ys shitt vpp so faste
Lamaunt That daunger sheweth on me his cruelte
 And yf she se the vertu fayle in me
 Of trwe seruice then she to fayle also
 No wonder were but this is the seurte 675
 I muste suffre which way that euer yt goo

86. Leve this purpos I rede yow for the best
 For lenger that ye kepe yt thus in vayn
 The lesse ye gete as of your hertys rest
Ladame And to reioyse yt shal ye neuer atteyn 680
 When ye abyde good hoope to make yow fayn
 Ye shal be founde assoted in dotage
 And in [the] ende ye shal know for certeyn
 That hope shal pay the wrecches for ther wage

 670 fayle]lacke PTh. 673 se]so S. the]that T. in]on LS.

674 then]though LPTTh. to]do PTh.

675 is]om S. the]my PTh. seurte]shorte L.

676 muste]most S. yt]I T.

677 Leve]Loue T. the]your~~e~~ LTC.

678 lenger that]the lengor TPTTh. thus]is SPTh.

679 of]for L. 681 fayn]gayne L.

682 founde]bounde T. assoted]assured T. dotage]dotance S.

683 the]HLTCSPTTh; om F.

684 That]om PTh. hope]om L. the]ye C. ther]your C.

wage]waye C; vyance S.

87. Ye say as falleth most for your plesaunce 685
 And your power ys grete all this I see
 But hope shall ^fneuer oute of my remembraunce
Lamaunt By whiche I felt so grete aduersyte
 For when nature hath sett in yow plente 702
 Of all goodnesse by vertu and by grace 690
 He neuer assembled hem as semyth me
 To put pite out of his dwellyng place 711

88. Pite of ryght ought to be resonable
 And to no wyght of grete dysavauntage 716
 There as ys nede yt shuld be profetable 695
Ladame And to the pitous shewyng no damage
 If a lady [wyll] do so grete outrage
 To shewe pite and cause hir own debate
 Of such pite cometh dispitous rage 715
 And of the love also ryght dedly hate 700

688 felt]fele PTh.

689 in]on S.

690 by(2)]hygh T.

691 He]Ne C. semyth]semed PTh.

693 ought]oweth T.

694 of]do no PTh.

695 yt]ther S. be]om S.

696 damage]domaye C.

697 wyll]TLCSPTh; om FH. do]shew S.

700 of]om S. the]suche PTh. dedly]dewly T.

f.57a 89. To comforth hem that lyve al confortlesse
 That is no harme but wurshipp to yowr name
 But ye that bere an hert of suche duresse
Lamaunt A faire body yformed to the same 700
 Yf I durst say ye wyne al this dyffame 705
 By cruelte which sytteth yow ful ylle
 But yf pyte which^e may al this attame
 In your high hert may rest and tary stille

90. Whateuere he be that seyth he loveth me
 And peraventure I leve that yt be soo 710
 Ought he be wrothe or shulde I blamed be
Ladame Though I dyd not as he wold haue me do
 Yf I medeled with such or other moo
 It myght be called pite manerles
 And aftirward yf I sholde lyve in woo 715
 Then to repent yt were to late I gesse

701 hem]him L. lyve]byn T.
 702 no]noon LTC. wurshipp]comfort PTh. 703 bere]haue LPTh.
 704 A faire body yformed to]And a fayre lady I must affyrme PTh.
 yformed]formed HS. 705 dyffame]fame L.
 707 may al this]all thys may T; may not pis C. attame]tame L.
 709 seyth]saith that L. 710 leve]beleue T. that]om S; well PTh.
 711 Ought]Ough LC; Shuld T. wrothe or]wrother T. shulde I]I
 schuld C; shold S. 712 as]and L. he]om L. wold]wol L.
 713 or]om S. 714 manerles]mercylesse PTh.
 715 aftirward]aftywardes T.

- f.60b 91. O merbill hert and yit more hard parde
 Which mercy may not perce for no labour
 More stronge to bowe then is a myghti tre
Lamaunt What vayleth yow to shew so gret rygour 720
Lamaunt Please yt yow more to se me dye this hour
 Before your eeyn for your dysport and play
 Thene for to shew som comfort or socour
 To respyte deth that chasith me alway
92. Of your disese ye may haue allegeaunce 725
 And as for myn I let yt ouerschake
 Also ye shal not dye for my plesaunce
Ladame Nor for your heel I can no suerte make
 I nyle not hate myn hert for others sake
 Wepe they laugh they or sing this I waraunt 730
 For this matere so wele to vndertake
 That none of yow shal make therof avaunt

717 yit]om T. hard]hardyr T. 718 perce]parte T.
 719 stronge]straunger T. 720 vayleth]auayleth TPTTh.
 721 yt]om T. yow more]more yow S. 723 or]and Th.
 724 that]whiche LCSPTh. chasith]calleth T.
 725 disese]dease L. 726 ouerschake]ouerslake TSPTh.
 727 ye]I L. for]as for S. 728 heel]lyfe T.
 729 nyle]wold T; wyll PThH². hate]haue S; hurt PThH².
 hert]selfe PThH². others]oper C.
 730 laugh they]or lawgh T. this]thus T; they PTh.
 731 wele]wyll TPTTh. to]I TCPTh.
 732 yow]them PTh.

93. I can no skyle of song by god allone
 I haue more cause to wepe in your presence
 And wele I wote avaunter am I none 735

Lamaunt

For certeynly I loue bettir sylence
 On shulde not love by his hertys credence
 But he were sure to kepe it secretely
 For a vauntir ys of no reuerence
 When that his tong ys his most en[e]my 740

94. Malebouche in court hath grete comaundement

f. 61a

Eche man studyeth to say the wurst he may
 These fals louers in this tyme now present

Ladame

They serue to bost to langele as a lay
 The most secrete wille wel that som men say 745
 How he mystrusted ys on som partyse
 Wherfore to ladyes what men speke or pray
 It sh[uld] not be beleuyd in no wyse

733 no]nat PTh. song]loue PTh.
 735 wele]wil C. I]ye PTh. am]as S.
 736 certeynly]in certeyn T. 740 enemy]^{LH}~~HT~~TCSPTH; enmy F.
 742 he]that he S. 744 to bost]best PThH². to(2)] and T.
 745 wille wel that]ywis yet PThH². men]man LC.
 746 mystrusted]mystersted L. on]in TSPTh. partyse]party H¹;
 parte T.
 747 to]ladyes]these louers T. what]whatsoever T; whan so PTh.
 men]they T; om L. speke or]om T. pray]say TPTH.
 748 shuld]LTCSPTH; shal FH. not]om PTh; cancelled H².
 beleuyd]beloued L. no]oo L.

95. Of good and ylle shal be and is alway
The world ys suche the [er]th yt is not playn 750
They that be good the preve shewyth euery day

Lamaunt

And other wyse grete velany certeyn
Is it reson though on his tonge dystayn
With cursed speche to do himself a shame
That suche refuse shulde wrongfully remayn 755
Vpon the good renomed in her fame

96. Suche as ben noght when they her tydynges new
That eche trespase shal lyghtly haue pardon
They that porposyn to ben good and trew

Ladame

Wel set by noble dysposycion 760
To contynue in good condycion
They er the frist that falleth in damage
And ful frely ther [hertes] abandonn
To lytle feyth wyth soft and fair langage

-
- 750 erth]^cLTSPTh²; deth FH¹. yt]om LSPTTh². not]om L.
playn]all playne SPTTh².
751 euery]eche S. 753 Is it]It is HPTTh. though]thought S.
756 renomed]renewyd T. her]hys T. fame]name T.
757 her]hyr S. 759 porposyn]pursuen PTh.
760 Wel]Wolle LTSPTh. set]nat set PTh. noble]none yll PTh.
761 contynue]conceyue L. good]euery good PTh.
762 frist]first HLTCSPTh. falleth]fallen HPTTh; fall TS.
763 ther]theym H; the PTh. hertes]TLCSPTh; om FH.
764 soft and fair]fair and softe H.

97. Now know I wel of verrey certeynte 765
 Though one do trwly yit shal he be shent
 Syth al maner of Iustice and pite
Lamaunt Is banysshed out of a ladys entent
 I can not see bot al is at oo stent
 The good and ylle the vice and eke * vertu 770
 Suche as be gode shal have the punysshment
 For the trespace of hem that ben vntrewe
98. I have no power you to do grevaunce
 Nor to punyssh none other creature
 But to eschew the more encomberaunce 775
- Ladame 4.61b To kepe vs fro yow al I hold it sure
 Fals semblaunt hath a visage ful demure
 Lyghtly to cacche the lades in awayte
 Wherfore we most yf that we wil endure
 Make ryght good wacche lo this is my conceyte 780
-

11. 765-856 om S.
- 766 Though]If LCPTh. yit]ye T.
 769 oo]a T.
 770 and(1)]the LCPTh. vertu]TC; the vertu FHLPTH.
 771 shal]suche LPTh.
 772 ben]lyue PTh; bith L; beth C; be T.
 773 you to do]to do yow T. grevaunce]no greuaunce L.
 774 to]to doo L. punyssh]promyse T.
 776 fro]frendes L. yow]yois C.
 777 visage]face PTh.
 778 the]these PTh. awayte]a waite HLTCPTH.
 779 that]om TPTH. endure]here endure PTh.

99. Sith that of grace oo goodly worde allone

May not be had bot alway kept in store

I pele to god for he may here my mone

Lamaunt

Of the duresse whiche greueth me so sore

And of pite I pleyn me forther more

785

Whiche he forgate in al his ordenaunce

Or elles my lyf to haue ended before

Which he so sone put out of remembraunce

100. Myn hert nor I haue don yow no forfeyte

By which ye sholde compleyn in any kynde

790

There hurteth yow no thing bot your conseyte

Ladame

Be Iuge yourselfe for so [ye shal] yt fynde

Ones for alway let this synke in your mynde

That [y]e desire shal neuer reioysed be

Ye neoy me sore in wastyng al this wynde

795

For I haue seyde ynogh as semyth me

781 oo]a PTh. allone]nat one PTh.

782 not]nowe PTh. 783 pele]appele PTh; speke ^T~~TH~~.

784 whiche]that T. so]om T.

785 pleyn me]complayne PTh.

788 he so sone]am soo soone H²; so soone am PTh. 789 no]om T.

791 There]Nothing PTh. yow]then T. no]thing]om PTh.

your]your owne LPTTh.

792 ye shal]LTCPTh; shal ye FH. 793 Ones]Thus LPTTh. for]om PTh.

794 ye]HLC; your TPTTh; the F. reioysed]recovered PTh.

795 al this]of your T. 796 yno~~x~~gh]Inought L.

101. This woful man rose vp al in his peyn
 And so departed with wepyng countenaunce
 His wooful hert almost it brest in tweyn

Verba Auctoris Ful lyke to dye walkyng forth in a traunce 800
 And seyde now deth com forth thiself avaunce
 Or that myn hert forgete his propurte
 And make short[er] al this woful penaunce
 Of my pore lyf ful of aduersyte

102. From thens he went but whedir wyst I noght 805
 Nor to what part[e] he drow in sothfastnese
 But he no more was in hys lades thought
 For to the daunce anone she gan her drese
 And aftirwarde one tolde me [thus] expresse
 He rent his heere for angwyssh and for payn 810
 And in hymself toke so grete heuynesse

P.62a That he was deed wythyn a day or tweyn

797 al in]in al LTCPTh.
 798 departed]partyd CP. wepyng]heuy T.
 799 it]om T; to PTh. in tweyn]atwayne LC.
 800 walkyng forth]forth walkyng H.
 801 now]om TPTH. forth]forthe and T.
 803 shorter]LTCPTh; short FH.
 806 parte]HLTCPTh; party F.
 807 hys]om T.
 809 one]and T. thus]TCPTh; this L; it H; om F.

103. Ye trew lovers this I beseche yow al
 Such av[au]nt[ours] fle hem in euery wyse
 And as peple defamyd ye hem cal 815
 For they trewly do yow grete preiudice
 Refus hath made for al suche flater^yse
 His Castells strong stuffed wyth ordynaunce
 For they haue had longe tyme be theyr office
 The hole contre of love in obeysaunce 820

104. And ye ladys or what estate ye be
 In whom worshipp hath chose his dwellyng place
 For goddes love do no suche cruelte
 Namely to hem that hath deserued grace
 Nor in no wyse ne folowe ye not the trace 825
 Of hir that here is named ryghtwysly
 Which be reson me semeth in this cace
 May be called la belle Dame saunz mercy

Explicit la bele

dame sanz mercy

11. 813-856 om P. 813 Ye]The LTh. this]thus LTTh.
 814 Such]All T. avauntours]auauntours C; adventures FLTPTh;
 aventure H. euery]any T.
 817 Line om LTh. 818 Castells]castell T.
 821 or]of T. estate]a state L. 822 In]Of LTh.
 823 goddes]god is H. 824 Line om LTh. hath]haue TC; om H.
 825 folowe]foule LTh. ye]om LCTh.
 826 here is named]ys namyd here T. 828 la]Le H.

105. Go lytle booke god sende the good passage
Verb trans- Chese wel thy waye be symple of manere 830
latoris Loke thy clothyng be lyke thy pilgremage
 And specially lat this be thy prayer
 Vnto hem [al] that the wil rede or here
 Where thou art wrong after theyr help to call
 The to corect in eny part[e] or all 835
106. Pray hem also wyth thyn humb[l]e seruice
 Thy boldnesse to pardon in this cace
 For els [th]ou art not able in no wyse
 To make thyself apere in any place
 And forther more beseche hem of thair grace 840
 By their fauour and supportacion
 To [t]ake in gre this rude translacion

832 thy]in T.

833 al]LTCTh; om FH.

835 in]on C. parte]HLTCTh; party F.

836 humble]HLTCTh; humbe F.

838 thou]HLTCTh; you F.

842 take]HLTCTh; make F.

- f.62b 107. The which god wote stondeth ful destitute
 Of eloquens of metre and colours
 [Like] as a best nakyd wythoute refute 845
 Vpon a playn to byde al maner showres
 I can no more but aske of hem socours
 At whos request thou was made in this wyse
 Comaundyng me wyth body and seruice
108. Ryght thus I make an ende of this processe 850
 Besechyng him that al hath in balaunce
 That no trew man be vexed causelesse
 Os this man was which is of remembraunce
 And al that doth thair faytheful obseruaunce
 And in their trouth purpose hem to endure 855
 I pray God sende hem bettir aventure

843 destitute]deceytute L.

844 colours]of coloures H.

845 Like]LTCTh; Wilde FH.

846 to byde]to abide LTTh; tabyde C.

847 aske]axe H.

848 was made]were made LTCTh; made was H.

Pynson's Envoy

Leuoy de l'indriatour

O ye lusty galantes of note and fame

Put Pynson's Envoy in oblivion

In love beware was that the great advice

But moderate yet beware of love's disease

His will it seems to have a love disease

Which may be cured by love's disease

Your love's disease is love's disease

And ye ladies ended with love's disease

When these diabolical leuys labour still

With their fayned and painted eloquence

Their wretched love to have you to fulfill

Many a love's disease they will

Yet for all that take heed of all they say

It is no love that makes them say

Pynson's Envoy

Lenvoy de limprimeur

O ye lusty galondes of hote corage
 Put nat this example in oblyuion
 In loue beware vse nat to great outrage
 But moderate your desyres by discrecion
 Els wyll it tourne to your owne confusyon
 & than your frendes shall haue cause to morne
 Your enemyes you mocke & laugh to scorne
 And ye ladyes endued with hye prudence
 Whan these disceitfull louers labour styll
 With their fayned and paynted eloquence
 Their carnall lusty^es to cause you to fulfyll
 Many a huge othe depose they wyll
 Yet for all that take hede aboue all thyng
 It is no loue they shewe but blandysshⁱhyng
 But for the obtaining of one pleasure
 To be wille to suffer trewe penance

For very loue is that that dothe couete
 His owne labour his owne thing to dispende
 To another persons pleasure and profete
 His owne pleasure in no wyse to attende
 But he that woyng a lady dothe entende
 Taccomplysshe his owne voluptuousnesse
 Loueth nat her but loueth him selfe doutlesse

For he that by wordes or gift^s~~s~~ doth pursue
 To deprive a woman her best iewell
 As her good name & fame & chast vertue
 Is signe of no good loue but hate cruell
 Wherefore in reason I may conclude well
 Who loueth his lady after such~~e~~ rate
 Sheweth her no true loue but most deedly hate

And he that consydreth the necessitees
 Longyng to loue as attendance thoght & care
 Labour cost and other incommoditees
 Prudently ought to take hede and beware
 He finally shall fynde none other welfare
 But for the atchyueng of one plesaunce
 To be sure to suffre treble penaunce

Wherefore ye gentyll people yong and olde

Men or women what soeuer ye be

To loue I counsayle you be nat to bolde

Excepte it be ordred to suche degre

As concerneth spousayle in honeste

Yet if ye wyll in feruent loue excell

Loue god aboue althing & than do ye well

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La Belle Dame sans Merci

Three English editions of La Belle Dame sans Merci already
exist. They are:

- 1) An edition prepared for the Early English Text Society by
F.J. Furnivall, and published as item no. 51.80 in the
collection Political, Religious and Love Poems. This edition
was based on the manuscript Harley 372, in which a good deal of
the text is in the wrong order.
- 2) An edition made by Professor Skeat for inclusion in his volume
Chaucer and other Poets, which forms an appendix
to his six volume edition of Chaucer's Works. This is based on
the Payne edition of 1832, controlled by collating with Fairfax
Harley 372 and other early versions of the text.
- 3) A re-edition of Dr. Furnivall's first edition, published
by the Early English Text Society in 1903. This is based on
the same manuscript as the first edition, but with corrections
from the French text in the 1832 edition by André de Chénier. La Belle

~~La Belle Dame sans Mercy~~ A note on earlier editions of
La Belle Dame sans Mercy

Three English editions of La Belle Dame sans Mercy already exist. They are:

- 1) An edition prepared for the Early English Text Society by F.J. Furnivall, and published by them in 1866 (Vol. ^{pp. 52-80.} XV) in the collection Political, Religious and Love Poems. This edition was based on the manuscript Harley 372, in which a good deal of the text is in the wrong order.
- 2) An edition made by Professor Skeat for inclusion in his volume Chaucerian and other Pieces, Oxford 1897, which forms an appendix to his six volume edition of Chaucer's Works. This is based on the Thynne edition of 1532, controlled by collation with Fairfax 16, Harley 372 and Cambridge University MS Ff. 1. 6.
- 3) A re-edition of Dr. Furnivall's first edition, also published by the Early English Text Society, ^{still as volume XV in their Ordinary Series,} ~~as Vol. LXI in their Extra Series~~ in 1903. This re-edition, Dr. Furnivall tells us, is based on the manuscripts Cambridge University Ff. 1. 6, collated with Trinity R. 3. 19 and Harley 372, with references to Chartier's French text in the 1617 edition by André Du Chesne, Les Oeuvres

de maistre Alain Chartier, clerc, notaire et secrétaire des Roys
Charles VI & VII.

No previous edition has taken into account the readings of all six known manuscripts and the two early sixteenth century printed texts of the poem,

Dr. Hermann Gröhler's dissertation Über Richard Ros'
Mittelenglische Übersetzung des Gedichtes von Alain Chartier 'La
Belle Dame sans Mercy' (Breslau 1886) was based on Dr. Furnivall's 1866 text, but with allowance made for the wrong order of stanzas.